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ADOLF  
HITLER  
BY  
JAMES MURPHY



ADOLF HITLER



# ADOLF HITLER

THE DRAMA OF HIS CAREER

By  
JAMES MURPHY



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CHAPMAN & HALL LTD  
LONDON



It should be noted that all references to Herr Hitler's autobiography MY STRUGGLE (*Mein Kampf*) which appear in the course of the following narrative refer to the original German edition of the work. Such brief quotations as the author has inserted, and upon which he has based comment, have been translated by him from this edition.

An excellent English edition of Herr Hitler's work is published by Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, price 18/- net. This edition, which is entitled MY STRUGGLE, is fully illustrated and will enable English readers, whether they are in agreement with Herr Hitler's policy or not, to consider the views of a man who has done so much to inspire and reinvigorate a dispirited nation.

First Published  
1934  
Chapman & Hall Ltd.  
11 Henrietta St.,  
London  
W.C.2

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## PREFACE

THIS little book has been written at the request of the publishers. But they have left me a perfectly free hand. Within such narrow limits of course I could not attempt a comprehensive account of Hitler's career and the inner meaning of the movement which he has created and directed. My problem has accordingly been that of choosing the few things that must necessarily be said from the mass of things that might be said.

I have discarded the idea of giving a personal study of the Nazi leader, simply because the average non-German reader could not possibly understand Hitler without first having at least a general idea of the political situation out of which Hitler has emerged. Therefore the tracing of this situation in broad outline is an essential pre-condition of any attempt at enlightenment on the Hitler problem.

Moreover, Hitler is the incorporation of



National Socialism—much more, for instance, than Mussolini is the incorporation of Fascism or Lenin of Bolshevism. It would be possible to write a readable and adequate biography of Mussolini in which the story of Fascism would be only incidental; for Mussolini played many parts before he became a Fascist *condottiere*. But Hitler has been a national-socialist since he was a boy of sixteen in Vienna and has stuck to that line ever since. Nothing else seems to have engaged his interest. And so it comes about that his personal story is almost exclusively the story of his movement.

What I may call the negative aspects of the Hitler achievement have been ignored in this book. And that for two reasons: first because enough has already been published in the English language by opponents of the Hitler regime; secondly because negative criticism is an obstacle rather than a help to the understanding of an historical movement. Hitler has been able to carry his ideas into effect not because he directed his campaign against certain vested interests in Germany, but rather because he estimated the needs of the troubled situation more correctly than the other political

leaders, and because he had a positive plan for coping with them. This plan has already turned out successful—in its first stages at least—because it has pushed the German people forward in a direction that is in line with their historical development. The unification of the German Reich into one national State and the settlement of the religious question are two examples of this. And they happen to be instances in which Bismarck tried but failed. One might go further and say that the idea of the Corporative State is in line with the economic development of Europe. And one might even go still further and say that the nationalisation of socialism is in line with contemporary historical trends. It is this positive, forward-looking urge that has brought the Hitler movement on.

As in the case of every other revolutionary change we can understand national-socialism only by reference to the positive content in its programme. The Reign of Terror did not make the French Revolution an abiding historical force. It was rather such positive achievements as the enfranchisement of the peasant on his land, the enactment of a legal code



before which all citizens were equal, and so on. The criminal and even official hooliganism that marked the first stages of Italian Fascism was a hindrance rather than a help to its advance and its national acceptance. Fascism has endured in Italy and become a constructive force not because of but in spite of its early excesses. The same may turn out to be true of the Hitler movement in Germany. Only the future can tell.

But enough has been accomplished already to give Hitler a place in European history and his movement an historical setting. In this small book I have aimed at indicating the broad features of the German situation which make the man and his movement intelligible to the outsider.

## CHAPTER ONE

## THE HOUSE-PAINTER'S MATE

ON March 5th 1933 there was a General Election in Germany. The result of it was to set up and constitutionally sanction a revolution in the internal administration of the country and in its foreign relations. Thereby the German Republic, which had existed since the downfall of the Hohenzollern Empire in 1918, virtually came to an end. What is called *The Third Empire* has taken its place. But this is an empire without an emperor and will almost certainly remain so as long as the revolutionary forces which brought it into being are able to control it. The revolution is not a restoration. The return of the Hohenzollerns is no part of its programme.

The man who organised and led the movement which brought about this political transformation is an Austrian ex-corporal named Adolf Hitler. Only in 1932 did he become a



naturalised German subject. A year later he was made Chancellor of Germany. And at the opening session of the new Parliament, on March 23rd 1933, a Bill was passed by a majority of 441 votes to 94 conferring absolute power on the ex-Austrian for a period of four years to come. By virtue of this parliamentary enactment he can alter the German Constitution at his will; for the Bill expressly enables him to make and promulgate laws without the assent of Parliament, even though such laws may deviate from the Constitution. Without consulting Parliament he may also enact the Budget, take up loans and conclude treaties.

Thus the Chancellor-Dictator is legally invested with much wider powers than Bismarck ever dreamt of assuming. His authority is more absolute than that of any other contemporary dictator, even the Italian. And we must not forget that he has reached this position in an absolutely constitutional way. It is the result of fourteen years of strenuous toil—political campaigning up and down and east and west throughout the country, careful and elaborate organising, pamphleteering, newspaper propaganda and the pouring out of

torrents of oratory at mammoth political gatherings such as the Germans had never heard or seen before. The result of it all was finally to persuade the electorate to give its free and formal sanction to the revolutionary movement. Three weeks after the General Election the popular decision was ratified by a majority of three-fourths of the members of Parliament. It was thus that Adolf Hitler became Chancellor and Dictator. And that is what makes his achievement unique.

Within the first nine months after the establishment of the dictatorship a series of legislative measures was passed and put into effect which have altered the very substance of German social and political life. It is difficult to explain to British readers what has happened, because they have not had experience of the mental preparation which has been going on in Germany for over half a century—in fact ever since Hegel's philosophy became popular. What is called the totalitarian State has little or no meaning for us; but it has a very concrete meaning in Germany. And it is now in existence there. Its dominant features are the following:

The National Socialist Party, of which Adolf



Hitler is founder and leader, has ceased to exist as a political party. It has been transformed into the State itself. Parliamentary government is dead and no political parties exist any more. They have been either exterminated or absorbed into the National Socialist State.

All public unions and societies which were even only indirectly political in their aims have been absorbed as organic institutions of the unitarian State. Thus the Social-Democratic, Communist and Christian Socialist Trades Unions have disappeared. Their place has been taken by statal corporations, or guilds, which have taken over their funds and membership and management. Corporations or guilds, under the control of the State, have been instituted for each profession, and no private person can carry on a profession without belonging to one or other of these. This is much the same idea as that of the Corporative State in Italy.

The national machinery of commerce and industry has been taken under the supervision and control of the State. Public morals and public health have become statal preserves. The theatre and the cinema and the printing

press have been expurgated of all material calculated to be demoralising in its tendencies. The haunts of the underworld in the various cities have been evacuated. A policy of national eugenics has been adopted and put into practice. German men and women may not propagate their species if a hereditary or hereditable blemish be discoverable on their persons or in their pedigrees.

Long-standing ecclesiastical traditions have been set aside. The Hitler Government has concluded a Concordat with the Catholic Church whereby the latter agrees to renounce all activities in the political field. In accordance with this undertaking the Catholic Centre Party has been dissolved and absorbed into the National Socialist State. Thus passes one of the most prominent political factors in German public life since the days of Bismarck. The Protestant Church in Germany was hitherto split up into about twenty-five different bodies. It has now been unified under the one national ecclesiastical discipline.

This miracle of universal transubstantiation of German institutions has been effected by



one man. It was all forecast and foreplanned in the book which Adolf Hitler wrote while in the convict prison of Landsberg in Bavaria during the spring and summer and autumn of 1924.

Who is this Adolf Hitler and how has he been able to bring about such an achievement? In the first place, how has it come about that a comparatively insignificant outsider from a neighbouring country should so suddenly be placed in supreme control of the great German nation? And, in the second place, how is it that he seems to have the support of the national will at his back? Hitler never before held any position of public importance. He reached only the rank of corporal while in the army (Mussolini rose to the rank of sergeant). Hitler has never been beyond a grammar school, and he did not attend that regularly, because as a boy he suffered from weak lungs. His parents died when he was sixteen years old, and he had to go to work at that age to get his food. He is now only forty-four. Yet he is supreme arbiter in one of the greatest of

modern nations, and his influence on the course of world affairs may possibly one day be of great moment. How can the miracle of this career be intelligently described?

Many foreign newspaper correspondents and other writers whose profession it is to inform public opinion on the significance of current political events have dismissed Hitler by calling him a fool, a mountebank and a vulgar parvenu. That is nonsense. The measures and methods which he adopted during twelve years of political campaigning must obviously have been more efficient than those employed by the older politicians. And the whole movement led by Hitler must have responded to public needs and demands which his rivals and detractors had ignored. The truth is, I think, that Hitler belongs to that modern phenomenon of leadership which we find exemplified in men like Mustafa Kemal (whose father, like Hitler's, was a minor customs official), Lenin and Stalin, Mussolini and Masaryk.

Like all these, Hitler is of quite humble origin. His father was a customs official at the Austrian frontier town of Braunau, which lies about eighty miles north-east of Munich on



the other side of the Inn valley. Here Adolf Hitler was born in 1889. It is a small town of about three thousand inhabitants and a rather unimportant railway station. The elder Hitler did not have onerous duties to perform, though he was accustomed to talk about himself rather highfalutinly in his capacity as guardian of the frontier of the Habsburg Empire. But those were easygoing days. Alas! they are now only a memory. The Austrian customs official used to greet the traveller with a kindly "*Grüss Gott*" and let it go at that. He took your word as to the contents of your luggage. And it was generally the same in regard to the importers of merchandise. Therefore young Adolf Hitler cannot have inherited the will to command from his father.

But the father had some characteristics which obviously have been handed on. He was a great talker and had big notions in his head. Moreover, he had a fixed idea of the supreme importance of the State, and his dearest wish was that his son should become a high State official. Young Adolf did not agree with the latter idea. He had an artistic turn of mind and wanted to be an architect.

At the other side of the frontier was Germany. At an early age Adolf began to like the Germans better than his own people. The smart sky-blue uniforms of the Bavarians appealed to him, and the general bearing of the German officials appeared much more efficient than that of the easygoing Austrians. From what Hitler tells us of himself in his autobiography, *My Struggle*, we may infer that in his boyhood he was antagonistic to his surroundings. He wanted to be superior to them. And so he used to play at being a German. This may partly be accounted for by the fact that he was not a full-blooded Austrian himself, his mother being a Bohemian. And Bohemians were looked down upon by pure-blooded Austrians in the good old days of Emperor Francis Joseph. In those Austro-German frontier towns there used to be endless discussions on the rival merits of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg Empires. Young Hitler became a Germanophile because he thought it made him superior to his environment.

At the age of twelve he was sent to the grammar school at Linz. This was a big town on the Danube, the third biggest in Austria;



but young Adolf was not very much impressed, nor did he follow the school course very diligently. He took to drawing and reading history. The elder Hitler objected to both; but Adolf had his way. There was a teacher of history at Linz, Professor Poetsch, who was a red-hot Germanophile. He brought Alexander the Great and Scipio Africanus and Charlemagne and Frederick the Great to the notice of young Adolf, who henceforth became a hero-worshipper. And all his heroes were placed before a German background. He witnessed a performance of *William Tell* at the local theatre which fanned his patriotic imagination to a still warmer glow. Then he became enthralled with the German demigods in the music dramas of Richard Wagner.

Suddenly a tragic blow fell on the little family. Adolf's father died, and a little more than a year afterwards his mother was laid to rest beside her husband in the same grave. Adolf was not yet sixteen years of age. The piece of land which the Hitlers owned had to be sold to pay some little family bills and the expenses of the mother's funeral. From the wreck of the family belongings Adolf was able

to rescue just a few pounds for himself. With that in his pocket, and nothing else between him and starvation, he arrived in Vienna, the Austrian capital.

At that time the old Habsburg regime was still in its glory. Vienna was in many ways the gayest and most care-free capital in Europe. The Austrians were not oppressed with that sense of world destiny which weighed so heavily on the Germans. They were good-natured, gentlemanly fellows, willing to live their own lives in their own way and let others do the same. If they had any sense of their racial or national superiority they took it for granted and did not shout it from the house-tops. But if a chance circumstance should arise wherein they vented their feelings in that direction they usually did so against the Prussians, whom they considered as boorish fellows and almost bound to get the world into trouble some day of other. All this raised the spirit of opposition in the Germanophile soul of the toll-collector's son from Braunau.

Moreover, though there was plenty of Christian charity in Austria there was nothing approaching the *Pflichtgefühl*—the sense of



duty—of the Germans. This is a militant virtue in the Fatherland. It is designed to help not weakness but strength. Adolf Hitler did not want Christian charity. He wanted to get a chance to develop his talents as an artist or architect, and if he were in Germany he might have got that chance because the Germans would have looked upon it as a duty to see that no budding talent was lost to the Fatherland. Here in Vienna, however, these lackadaisical Austrians were not troubling themselves about the tragedy of talent withering in the bud. Young Adolf presented his drawings at the Academy of Art with the idea that he might get a scholarship there. But his application was rejected.

Bread was now his chief problem. He might beg or sponge; and if he did he would undoubtedly be helped in the kindly Austrian capital. But Adolf was not of that sort. He sought work and took whatever came his way. He found employment mostly in the building trade, sometimes as house-painter's mate, sometimes as a mere fetch-and-carry auxiliary. The older men with whom he worked talked socialism interminably. Adolf had been accustomed to talk and discussion in his home town.

From his father he had inherited the gift of the gab. But he was hopelessly gravelled by the arguments on socialism which he now heard at Vienna. Socialism was still a phenomenon almost confined to the large cities, and Vienna was the first large city with which Adolf Hitler had become acquainted. The talk which he heard offended his sense of loyalty to the State and belittled his heroes, especially the German Kaiser.

It also offended his conscience to hear them talk against the Church as well as against the State. Adolf Hitler was a Roman Catholic, though not of the formal and protesting kind which is so common in Protestant countries. As yet he had had no experience of a Protestant country, and did not know of any religion other than the Roman Catholic except by hearsay. In Vienna there was a strong political party known as Christian Socialists whose principles were those laid down in the famous encyclical of Pope Leo the Thirteenth called *Rerum Novarum*, and published in 1891. It was an application of Christian principles to modern industrial conditions. The encyclical is of importance in the story of Hitler's career, because the economic foundations of the



National Socialist Movement which eventually brought him to the chancellorship of Germany rest on the principle of co-operation between State and employers and employed. This principle was first explicitly laid down in Pope Leo's encyclical.

The socialists with whom Hitler worked tried to induce him to join their union. He said he would think it over and would study their arguments. In order to acquaint himself with the other side of the question he went to the Christian Socialists. Here he was presented with an organically constructed system of teaching on the labour question. This was not merely a negation of Marxist socialism. It was socialism that could begin its constructive work here and now, without having to wait for the apocalyptic revolution which would bring about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Adolf Hitler read the newspapers and pamphlets published by the Christian Socialists. He also attended their debates, in the course of which he made the acquaintance of Karl Lueger, the Mayor of Vienna, who was a leader among the Christian Socialists. It was from him that Hitler first learned to hate the Jews.

He had seen no Jews in Braunau and only a scattered few in Linz. But here in Vienna the trade of the whole metropolis seemed to be in their hands. Perhaps it was just as well for the easygoing Austrians that they had these shrewd Asiatics to manage their business affairs. The pity of it now seems to be that they did not have the Jews to manage their politics also. But Hitler could not look at it in that way. Karl Marx was a Jew and was the founder of international socialism, which denied the right of private property, and all authority deriving therefrom. Its crude materialism scoffed at those moral values which to Hitler were more precious than all the gold of the world. The quality of his heroes, of Charlemagne and Frederick the Great, could not be gauged by any material measure. It must be remembered also that in the countryside where Hitler's boyhood was spent every hill and hillock is crowned with a crucifix bearing an image of the dead Christ, sometimes ultra-realistically painted after the instinctive dictates of the peasant imagination. This symbol, standing at every turn of the wayside in Bavaria and Austria, was fresh in young Adolf's



imagination when he ran up against the crude materialistic teachings of Jewish socialism in the Austrian capital.

Then he hit upon the key of the whole trouble in Vienna. Austria was decadent because it was in the hands of the Jews. They controlled the Press, the theatres, the banks and business, art and literature, and even science. Hitler became convinced that this Asiatic poison in its organism was accountable for the decaying state of the Habsburg Empire. With this conviction in his head he left the Austrian capital after six years of hardship and hunger. He has always been very frank about it. "I went to Vienna," he said at his trial in 1924, "and there I studied the social and racial problem and the Marxist movement. When I left Vienna I was a convinced anti-Semite, a deadly enemy of the Marxist philosophy, and a pan-German."

He came to Munich, the capital of Bavaria, which was then the leading Federal State in the German Empire. Thanks to Hitler, it has recently been deprived of its statal autarchy and wholly absorbed into the German Reich. At the time that Hitler came to Munich—two

years before the War—the Bavarian capital was the artistic centre of gravity in the German Empire. Mostly all the painters of note gathered there, also poets and novelists and dramatists and musicians. Hitler obviously chose Munich for his first sojourn in the German Fatherland because he still dreamt of becoming a painter and thought the surroundings here would be the most favourable that he could find. He worked as a carpenter, and did other odd jobs to earn his bread; but in his spare time he did some drawings for the newspapers and also some water-colours, which he was able to sell. On the whole, however, those first two years in Munich were years of hardship and want. Though Munich was not quite so easygoing as Vienna, it was easygoing enough, and did not trouble itself very much about the world mission of the Germanic race. It was a Catholic city and not in the least anti-Jewish at that time; for there was prosperity all round and not yet any need of a scapegoat. On the whole, Adolf Hitler was not so very much happier here than he had been in Vienna.

Then opportunity knocked at his door. The World War broke out. Hitler had not



done his military service in Austria ; so it was a question of either returning to Austria and joining up there or else volunteering in Munich. In those days, I remember well, the young fellows in and around Munich were rushing hither and thither madly athirst for glory. They thought that the German armies were marching inexorably on Paris and that the triumph would be over before they, the young volunteers, would have the right to wear the laurels. Thousands of young volunteers rushed to the Bavarian Ministry of War. Among them was Adolf Hitler. Being an Austrian he was readily accepted, because both the Habsburg and Hohenzollern armies were fighting side by side. He was enlisted in the Sixteenth Bavarian Infantry, known as the "List" Regiment. Within three months he was at Ypres under Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, storming the enemy's lines west of Langemark and breaking through there, on November 11th 1914, to the singing of "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles"—Hitler's favourite anthem even as a schoolboy at Braunau.

## CHAPTER TWO

## TWO MICE AND TWENTY-FIVE POINTS

HITLER spent four years on the western front. He became lance-corporal and trench-runner. In this latter capacity his duty was to maintain contact between the forward trenches and regimental headquarters. It was an occupation that gave the aspirant after military glory full opportunity to live dangerously ; for the job of trench-runner involved a great deal of exposure to the prying eyes of the enemy's snipers.

Hitler had several hairbreadth escapes. As a result he eventually became convinced that the hand of destiny sheltered him and that he was meant to fulfil his life's purpose in some other field of glory. When the British tanks first appeared on the battle-front the rank and file of the German soldiers were overawed. This was something that had not been calculated in the plans of their commanders. But



young Hitler seems to have been in his element at the sight of these superhuman monsters. After the stolid routine of the muddy trenches and the daily grousing of waiting soldiers, who seemed to be troubled more about their personal wants and discomforts than anything else, here was something truly Wagnerian, something that merited the opposing valour of a Siegfried or a Wotan.

One day Hitler found himself in single-handed conflict with a British tank. The monster waddled after the Aryan trench-runner and vomited fire at him; but he dodged it successfully until it finally descended into a shell-crater. While it gurgled and spluttered there, Adolf delivered his message at regimental headquarters. He was afterwards decorated with the Iron Cross.

A day came, however, when the fates did not seem to be on the Aryan side. This was in October 1916 when the British occupied Le Sars. Adolf Hitler was wounded. For a time it looked as if the German Reichstag would never unfurl the swastika from its flag-pole. But at the base hospital the surgeons discovered that the Aryan hero was not mortally damaged.

He had just received a "blighty" and would be able to return to his duties after a few months. So they sent him to a home hospital at Beelitz, near Berlin. When he left the hospital he had a few weeks' furlough which he spent in Berlin and Munich.

What he saw in the big cities on the home front did not please him. He thought he saw Jews everywhere and profiteering and carousing and a general devil-may-care way of running one day into another. It was here that he first began to think that the German Army was being let down by the civilians at home. During the preceding summer strikes in the munition factories had been engineered by the socialists. Hitler found the aftermath vocal everywhere. In the beer-halls of Munich there was grumbling and grousing and open talk against the Kaiser and loud demands for peace, especially on the part of the Bavarian peasants, whose sons had been taken away, so that they had no help to till the soil. They got good prices for their produce. But of what avail was that when they did not have the means of cultivation? Moreover, there was now talk of conscripting the older generation for service at



the front. Hitler had found Berlin revolutionary. He had found Bavaria pacifist. He tells us in his autobiography that he was glad when he got back to the fighting front in the spring of 1917. Wait until these victorious soldiers got home. They would teach a lesson to the Jews in Berlin and the hayseeds in Munich. That was Hitler's mood in 1917, and it has been his mood ever since.

He was back with his comrades in plenty of time for the gigantic and disastrous British offensive which opened along the Ypres section in June 1917. The German front lines were practically annihilated. Part of Hitler's regiment was blown to bits by a British mine and the trench-runner happened to be in that section. But the gods were on the Aryan side. After two months of inhuman gruelling the regiment was relieved. Only a handful of the original strength came back to billets.

It was in the final desperate stand made by the German Army that Adolf Hitler went down, seemingly for ever. On October 13th 1918 the British put over a gas-attack south of Ypres. The fearful poison entered the eyes of the Bavarian trench-runner and rendered him

totally blind. Somehow or other—he doesn't remember how—he stumbled back towards his lines and was picked up by stretcher-bearers. He was wounded all over and quite blind. They sent him away to the eastern end of Germany, to Pasewalk in Pomerania ; but he did not know where they were taking him, for he could see nothing.

Then one day in November, while he was still totally blind, the chaplain of the hospital where he lay came into the ward and announced that Kaiser Wilhelm and the Crown Prince had both fled to Holland, that Ludendorff had sneaked away to Sweden in disguise, that the German Army had formally accepted defeat by signing an armistice, that the sailors had mutinied at Kiel and Hamburg, that soldiers' and sailors' councils were being formed all over the country in imitation of bolshevic Russia, that a Socialist Government was being formed to rule the German Fatherland according to the prescription of the Jew, Karl Marx, and that the red flag was flying over the Kaiser's palace in Berlin, with red bunting draping the balconies.

Adolf Hitler could not understand the words that fell on his ears. He had no sight to convince himself that this was a real German chaplain



speaking the truth seriously. To say that he, like the majority of German soldiers, had never the slightest doubt about the invincibility of the German Army would not be to state the case adequately. In the mind of the heroically self-dramatised Hitler the deeds of his comrades in arms were the deeds of some superhuman race of warriors. The spectacle which they had presented to the world for four years had no parallel in human history; for never before did a comparatively small nation of less than seventy millions—numbering about one hundred and fifty millions if we add their allies—stand up so stoutly and for so long against the whole world. Enrolled against them there were about thirteen hundred millions of the human race, with 90 per cent of the earth's space and wealth and raw material at their disposal, to say nothing of the control of the seas and the blockading of all neutral ports against Germany, though this was in flat contradiction of the international treaty signed at London in 1909.

We can never hope to understand Hitler's subsequent political career and his success in bringing about Germany's resurgence if we do

not realise that his imagination, which has something of the Slav giantism in it—inherited from his mother—kept constantly reproducing the mighty achievements of his German comrades. Day after day he passed in review before his mind's eye the spectacle of the Russians, a mighty nation of more than double Germany's man-power, absolutely broken and defeated, the Roumanians wiped out a few months after they had joined the Franco-British alliance, four hundred thousand Italians laying down their arms at the sight of the first German troops on the Upper Isonzo, and about the same colossal number of British Tommies put out of action by one German drive at St. Quentin. These epic deeds were something positive in Hitler's mind, something that proved the quality of the men who performed them, something entirely independent of the question whether Germany would finally be victorious in this war or not. It was all a reinforcement of the belief in German superiority which first took possession of his mind as a schoolboy. Not being a German himself, Hitler could stand outside the whole achievement and value it as a guarantee of what the German race might still



be capable of achieving, even though it would have to pass through the experience of a temporary defeat, no matter how devastating that defeat may be. We must get this point well into our heads if we are to have a psychological understanding of what Hitler himself tells us about his reactions at this stage of his career.

The unseeing eyes wept, he tells us, as they had never wept since he stood beside his mother's open grave in Austria. These may have been tears of healing, for it was not long afterwards that his sight began to return. As he wept on his pillow in the hospital ward he realised that the war would have to be fought over again and won on the home front, so he then and there took a solemn resolution that he would devote his life—he was still under thirty—to the political work of reawakening the German spirit and steeling it against the internal enemies whom he believed to have been responsible for the military break-up. He tells us in his autobiography that from that hour and that resolution he never for a moment looked back, not even when the Socialist Government of Bavaria put him on trial in 1924 for high treason against the German Republic and

sentenced him to imprisonment in a fortress for five years.

When he was convalescent and the complete restoration of his sight assured he left the hospital and came to Munich. He presented himself at the headquarters of his old regiment and for the time being simply awaited developments. The city was in political turmoil. A Socialist Government had been set up in Bavaria with a Jew named Kurt Eisner at its head. This was a government of what were called the Majority Socialists, or Social Democrats, which would correspond somewhat to a Labour Government in England. Eisner was an idealist. He believed that the Allied and Associated Powers meant to honour the contract they had entered into with the German people when the Armistice was signed. But it soon became evident that the delegates who met at Versailles cared little for what they had been in the habit of calling the "plighted word." The basic principle of Wilson's offer of the Armistice in the name of the Allies was that the Allied and Associated Powers had no quarrel with the German people as such, but only with their rulers. Once the rulers had



gone the understanding was that an honourable peace would be concluded with the representatives of the German democracy. But the Versailles delegates flung Wilson's Fourteen Points to the winds. They condemned Germany to hand over a large portion of her mineral wealth, her colonies, her fleet and to deliver as payment in kind about a thousand million pounds worth of goods—ships, coal, etc. They took away about one-tenth of German home territory. And on top of all that they saddled the German people with a bill of approximately eighteen and a half thousand million pounds which was to be paid within thirty-six years. It could never be paid in gold, for, though the Versailles delegates did not know it, there are only a little more than two thousand million pounds worth of monetary gold in the whole world. If the sum were to be paid in goods this would mean the closing down of a large portion of the industrial plant in the allied countries and consequent unemployment.

This trite and sordid piece of history would not be worth recalling here except for the fact that it represents the first step in Adolf Hitler's political career. When Clemenceau proclaimed

his policy of totally dismembering Germany, and got the allied delegates at Versailles to accept it, he proved the salvation of the German militarists. In the circumstances the friends of democracy in Germany did not have a foot to stand upon. Kurt Eisner realised that his faith in Wilson's promises had been misplaced. He was assassinated in April 1919.

A Communist Government on the Soviet model was then set up in Munich, while the members of what had been Kurt Eisner's Cabinet retired to Bamberg and called themselves the legitimate government of Bavaria. Nobody knew who was in authority. It was high time for the military to step in.

The military authorities opened classes for the political education of ex-soldiers. Hitler attended one of these classes and proved himself an apt pupil. He soon got his diploma and was appointed political instructor to the soldiers of the Guard Regiment No. 41. Here he learned for the first time that he had the inborn gift of the orator and he determined to make good use of it.

One of his duties was to keep his military superiors informed about the political agitations



that were going on in the various Munich beer-halls and club meetings night after night. Thousands of new political clubs and societies were being formed ; for no man knew what the morrow would bring and each felt the need of some concerted plan to meet it. Hitler's attendance at various meetings night after night helped to give him an insight into the political trends that were active at the moment, and it also gave him the opportunity to compare the rival merits of the various programmes. One night he was sent to attend a meeting of a small group that called itself the German Labour Party. There were about twenty-five of them in all and they met in the taproom of a local beer tavern. The meeting was presided over by a professor, who made a speech in which it was stated that Berlin's crimes were the cause of Germany's distress, because Berlin was full of Jews and socialists. He suggested that Bavaria should separate from Prussia and form a South German Confederation, which Austria would eventually join. This brought Hitler to his feet. He made a speech against the knavery of quitting the sinking ship. Why not throw the Berlin Jews and socialists overboard

and save the whole German ship of state ? The Herr Professor left the chair and departed in silence.

As Hitler left the room a pamphlet was pushed into his hand by one of the members. The political instructor of Guard Regiment No. 41 stuck the pamphlet into his pocket and forgot all about it for the time being. Were it not for two mice which called his attention to it later on, the German National Socialist Party might never have been founded. Food was very scarce at that time in Germany, even for the mice, because the Allied blockade prevented supplies from reaching the starving people. Hitler, having a much more kindly soul than any that inhabited the bodies of Allied statesmen, thought even of the hungry mice. From his youth he had schooled himself in the virtue of self-denial, drinking and smoking little, and abstaining almost entirely from the use of meat. So it was easy for him to spare a little sugar for the mice. He used to place the piece of sugar on the floor of his room every night and took a great deal of pleasure in watching the happy faces of the two mice as they gorged themselves.



One early morning—it was springtime—the two mice had awakened his interest so much that he could not fall asleep again. Having nothing at hand to read he opened the pamphlet that the man had given him at the door of the taproom. It was the programme of the German Labour Party. This contained the famous twenty-five points which have since become the chief planks in the political programme of the National Socialist German Labour Party of which Adolf Hitler is the leader.

## CHAPTER THREE

## A PROPHET IN THE BEER-HALLS

ADOLF HITLER joined the German Labour Party. On that destiny-laden evening when he inscribed his name in the party register there were only four members present at the meeting. They had gathered round the kitchen table in a Munich tavern called *The Old Rose Bath*. The register contained only six names. Hitler's was the seventh. He was handed a card of membership which bore that mystical number. According to the treasurer's report the party funds amounted exactly to seven shillings and sixpence, at the normal rate of exchange. A propaganda department was formed and Adolf Hitler was appointed a committee-of-one to carry out the duties of this branch of the party organisation.

He got to work at once. He decided that they would hold public meetings and summon the populace to attend. Hitler's first breakaway



from the German tradition was to stake the fortunes of his party on the effectiveness of the spoken word. All the other parties were mainly dependent on newspapers and pamphlets and books. To understand the significance of Hitler's innovation it must be remembered that in Germany the written word is generally looked upon as the sole reliable means of inter-communication between human beings. There must be a *Schein* (a written document) for even the most paltry transaction. Everybody who thinks he has something to say wants to write a book or at least a pamphlet, the result being that in Germany three times more new books are published each year than in England. Everybody who speaks in public reads what he has to say. Professors would be considered lacking in diligence if they did not prepare their lucubrations word for word and consign them to written form before delivering them in the classroom. The consequence of this habit is that public speaking as we know it is very rare in Germany. Probably there are not half a dozen German orators who could come up to the standard required by an average British or American audience. Stresemann was one.

Adolf Hitler is another—and by far the best. He would be in his glory at a revivalist meeting in the Albert Hall.

The Propaganda Committee of the German Labour Party decided to call a public meeting. He sat down and wrote out eighty invitations with his own hand. Then he delivered them in person. There was an attendance of eleven at the first meeting under the new propagandist. At the second meeting the number had increased to thirty-four. And at the third meeting one hundred and eleven persons came. Within a few months the regular attendance had reached between two and three hundred. They now had to abandon the small taverns and hold their meetings in one of the mammoth beer-halls.

Perhaps I ought to explain here, for the sake of the reader who is not familiar with German ways, that what are called beer-halls are huge public-houses owned by the various breweries. These public-houses have no similarity whatsoever to the English type. The building itself is sometimes as large as one of the big London hotels and has several spacious rooms, some of which will accommodate as many as five



thousand people seated at tables. Munich is the centre of the beer industry. It is a city about twice the size of Dublin, but it has ten or twelve breweries, either within the city or in the neighbourhood, each of which is as prolific as the establishment of Messrs. Guinness on the banks of the Liffey. Every brewery has one principal beer-hall in the city and several smaller guest-houses, as they are called.

In these beer-halls food and beer are served all day long and until the small hours of the morning, for there is no "Dora." Should a club or society need a room for an evening's meeting one can always be reserved at the beer-hall on the understanding, of course, that the audience brings its thirst and its appetite. This is generally the sole recompense which the proprietor asks. His beer is always excellent and the supper he gives is usually good and as cheap as could be provided at home. So the whole arrangement is a very convenient one. You may take your evening meal and sip your beer while the orator holds forth from the platform at the end of the hall. Each brand of politics seems to have a predilection for its special kind of beer. At the time that I am

writing of the social democrats used to find that the mild and semi-sweet brand of the Lion Brewery mollified their spirits to the requisite degree of expansiveness which enabled them to embrace the democratic *bourgeoisie* even of foreign nations. The independent socialists collected at the *Hofbrau*, the Court Brewery, where the beer has a somewhat sharper tang, and the communists foregathered in the Spade Brewery, whose beer is heavier and headier. This brief description will help the reader to have an intelligent understanding of the background before which some of the subsequent events in Hitler's career were staged.

Hitler proved to be a magnificent attraction on the platform of the beer-hall. He seldom drank any beer and never mingled with the throng in the hall. He treated his audience as a congregation. He made a habit of appearing some time after the proceedings had opened, and his entry was prearranged, generally from a side-entrance. He had no illusions about the intelligence of the average citizen. Didn't Goethe utter a profound truth when he said "*Das Volk bleibt ein Kind*"?—which means that the mind of the mass is always the mind of



the child. It would be waste of time for a political organiser to appeal to the abstract reasoning powers of his hearers. They want play-acting. They want ceremonial. Hitler had long ago realised the value of ceremonial in stirring up and organising the popular imagination. He had been a choir-boy in the Roman Catholic church of his home town. Then he came to the great Catholic city of Vienna and witnessed the imperial splendour with which the Church services were carried out, especially when they were held in the presence of His Most Catholic Majesty the Emperor Francis Joseph. The lesson of all this was not lost on the future Chancellor-Dictator of Germany.

He determined to appear before his public not merely as the expounder of a political doctrine but rather as the high priest of a national religion. He evolved a sort of dramatic ritual for all his meetings. And he has held to that ever since. It is one of the major secrets of his success. When, for instance, the day came for the opening of his first Parliament as Chancellor of Germany he did not merely present himself on the Treasury Bench in

Parliament as a new British premier might have done. Not a bit of it. He insisted on all the members of the new Parliament coming out to Potsdam, the citadel of Prussian militarism, and taking their seats in the Garrison Church there. President Hindenburg, by no means in accordance with his personal wishes, had to come there also. He was dressed for the occasion in his gala uniform as *Generalissimo* of the German Armies and carried his marshal's baton. He stood in front of the altar in the rear of which Frederick the Great is buried, therefore literally at the tomb of the man who first gave Prussia her place among the nations. And in that solemn setting President Hindenburg consecrated Adolf Hitler to be chosen apostle of Germany's redemption. The dramatic appeal was more eloquent than a dozen speeches could have been.

But we must not anticipate. Our hero's activities are still confined to the purlieus of the Bavarian beer-halls. The purpose which he had before his mind during this first stage of his mission was to collect a group of followers who would have faith in him personally. He had unbounded faith in himself and in his



mission, firmly believing that the hand of destiny in some mysterious way had marked him to be the saviour of Germany. He was careful to keep out of the columns of the newspapers while building up his following, the mysterious word-to-mouth whisper, the personal touch, being deemed a far more efficient means of consolidating the appeal of the new gospel. By the winter of 1919 Hitler had some hundreds of regular followers. At the opening of 1920 they had grown to thousands. In the February of that year Hitler and his followers held a monster meeting in the *Hofbraubaus*, the beer-hall of the Court Brewery, which hitherto had been the preserve of the independent socialists. More than two thousand people packed the hall. They were not all followers of the new party, however. Several independent socialists and communists had come to make trouble.

After a few indifferent speakers had opened the proceedings, just to mark the contrast, the Austrian ex-corporal paced on to the stage. A chorus of catcalls rang through the hall; but that did not disconcert him. He liked opposition. After he had spoken for about

half an hour the communists began to think that he was one of their own. He attacked interest-bearing capital. He attacked the big multiple shops. He attacked the system of huge landed estates and said that these estates should be divided among peasant farmers. That went down magnificently with the Bavarians; for Bavaria is primarily an agricultural country. He attacked the Jews, not merely for having contaminated the blood of the German race but for having control of high finance, that mysterious thing about which the Bavarian knew nothing but which was held to be responsible for all wars. He attacked the Conference of Versailles, and explained that if the Germans were to pay all the tribute that the Allies demanded of them they would have to make enough money by their labour that if the sum were expressed in pound notes (I am translating his figures in order to make them comprehensible to the British reader), and if these pound notes were strung out end-to-end, the ribbon of paper-money thus created would encircle the earth more than fifty times, or would reach to the moon and back as many as five times. Here he was accurate enough in



his arithmetic. It appealed to the most stupid person in the audience. Then he turned on the socialist leaders, such as Kurt Eisner, who had been talking of world friendship, and said that socialism, like charity, ought to begin at home. He called on all the German socialists to unite as a national *bloc*. The result was that the independent socialists and communists who had come to jeer now found themselves cheering him to the echo.

Towards the end of that year even the Court Brewery was not big enough for Hitler. He engaged the huge banquet-hall of the Burgher Brewery in the Kaufinger Strasse. It accommodated five thousand people. And he filled it. Later on, in August 1921, he organised a monster meeting in the grounds of the Crown Circus. This place holds as many as Olympia or Madison Square Gardens. It was crowded. Loud-speakers were installed. Bands crashed out patriotic music. And the prophet from Braunau held the huge audience spellbound for a couple of hours. This was the crowning event of what may be called the propaganda stage of his movement. It had come forth into the public light from the catacombs of the beer-halls.

By this time Hitler had a Symbol around which his followers could rally as the early Christians rallied around the Cross. And he prescribed a gesture which had been copied from the Italian Fascists who in turn had copied it from what they had seen in a film representation of Hall Caine's *Eternal City*. They called this gesture *The Roman Salute*, though there is no historical justification whatsoever for the expression.

He had stolen the socialist thunder. He changed the name of his party from *The German Labour Party* to *The National Socialist German Labour Party*. He also adopted the red flag, which hitherto had been the monopoly of the socialists. Against this background of red he drew a white circle which contained the hooked cross, or swastika. The symbolism of the flag he explained at the monster meeting in the grounds of the Crown Circus. "The programme of national socialism," he declared "can be read in our flag. In the red we see the socialist idea of our movement, in the white the national idea, and in the swastika the symbol of the Aryan cause for which we are fighting." He was particularly eloquent on each of these



three points. If the German proletarians wished to have socialism they could have it ; but the only practical socialism would be a national socialism. Where was the sense in shouting "Workers of the World Unite" when the socialist leaders of France, together with the democracies of England and America, had decreed the German workman to be a slave whose hands must labour to put the tribute money into the pockets of his enemies, which finally of course—according to Hitler—would find its way into the pockets of the Jewish international financiers and thus swell the bulk of that interest-bearing capital under the burden of which the world was groaning.

His movement was now established. Some of the papers—the *Munich Post*, for instance—said he was possessed of an alien spirit (*Ein Besessener*) and called him a lunatic. There could be no better advertisement ; for prophets have been called lunatics since time immemorial. And the truth was that Hitler talked a great deal of common sense in a mad world.

Now that he had gathered his followers and consolidated their allegiance it was necessary to put forward some explicit programme on the

basis of which they could work for the reconstruction of the German nation. The political, economic and social programme of the National Socialist German Labour Party was finally drawn up in detail by Gottfried Feder and published by the party in 1922. It consisted of the famous twenty-five points, which Hitler has recently declared to be unalterable. In a subsequent chapter we shall consider these.



#### CHAPTER FOUR

#### SINN FEIN IN BAVARIA

IF WE are to follow intelligently the next stage in Hitler's career we must try to understand the political significance of the German borderlands. It has been a common mistake to speak of Germany as if it were a politically homogeneous nation like France or Italy. As a matter of fact, the internal political unification of Germany was not achieved until Hitler became Chancellor. Up to then Germany was a confederation of self-governing states which were politically represented in a federal parliament called the Reichstag.

Prussia was the most important of these confederate states and contained about two-thirds of the population that made up what used to be called the German Empire. The principal confederate states, outside of Prussia, where Bavaria, Saxony and Württemberg. Previous to the War these were independent

#### SINN FEIN IN BAVARIA

monarchies within the empire. Bavaria was the most important of them. It had its own king, its own parliament, its own army, its own postal service and its own national railway system. It also had a relatively independent fiscal system, somewhat as the Irish Free State has within the British Commonwealth to-day.

Prussia held the leadership, or what is called the hegemony, among the federal states within the empire. In what did this leadership consist? It was based principally on the fact that the King of Prussia was *ex-officio* German Emperor. In practice this meant that he was Supreme War Lord. He could declare war in the name of all the federal states. And once war was declared the King of Prussia automatically assumed control of the federal armies, which in times of peace were under the sole direction of the local state governments. That was the arrangement come to in 1871, after the Franco-Prussian War, when the German Empire was formally established at Versailles. This was called the Second Empire, following the First Empire, which used to be called the Holy Roman Empire and came to an end with the



Napoleonic conquests. The Second Empire crumbled in 1918, and Hitler is now busy building up what the national socialists call the Third Empire. This empire is certainly not monarchical, and we can hardly call it republican. The principle of government on which it rests is what Hitler calls the principle of aristocratic leadership. Quality and not quantity must count. The mob will not be called upon to select its lawgivers. These will arise automatically from the aristocracy of talent which gathers around the one personality who is to be supreme. For the moment Hitler himself is that personality.

Let us now come directly to the question of the German borderlands and consider particularly the case of Bavaria, which was the cradle of the Hitler movement. This hitherto independent Federal State lies in the southern part of what the maps label *Germany*. It has a population of about eight millions and is the most important agricultural region in the German confederation. Economically, its equilibrium is much more stable than any other of the German States, because it has a thriving industrial system to balance the agricultural.

Practically all the peasants are Roman Catholics, and three-fourths of the people living in the cities. Taken all in all, they are a good-natured, easy-going lot, brewing and drinking the best beer in the world. Munich, a city of some seven hundred thousand inhabitants, is the capital of Bavaria and the seat of government. Before the War it was the chief artistic centre of Germany. Music, literature and the arts thrived in Munich, and were encouraged officially. Wagner, for instance, was subsidised by the Bavarian Government and his operas nationalised, in the sense that the State became the owner of the copyright.

Generally speaking, Prussia was never popular with the rank and file of the Bavarians. Prussia was Protestant, Bavaria Catholic. The average Bavarian looked upon the Prussian as a somewhat rude, heel-clicking, sword-rattling autocrat with little or no social refinement and no artistic taste. Whenever one heard a stentorian shout at the waitress in a Munich beer-hall the mild-eyed Bavarian looked up from his mug of beer and said with an air of hopelessness that at the same time had a certain tone of pity in it: "*Nord Deutsch*," which meant



Prussian. In politics the Bavarians were traditionally "agin' the government"—that is to say, the federal government in Berlin.

The Catholic Centre Party had its stronghold in Bavaria and its great power in the federal parliament, the Reichstag, was not primarily due to its numbers but rather to the fact that it was the mouthpiece of an independent State. The pivot on which the Centre Party swung was broad-based on the peasant soil of Bavaria, and the Catholics of the rest of Germany formed the strength of its long arm. All the other German political parties were without a country. They represented ideas and ideologies and programmes and the class interests of industry, labour, land ownership and so on, but not the organic group interests of one nation as a whole. In other words, the Centre Party held much the same place in the Reichstag as the Irish Home Rule Party did in the British House of Commons before the war. But with a great difference, of course. If we imagine the Roman Catholics of the United Kingdom before the war as forming one-third of the whole population, and if we imagine all these Roman

Catholics organised in solid phalanxes behind the leaders of the Irish nationalists, we can form a picture of the enormous power that party would have, because not only would it stand for the united interests of one nation but its ramifications would reach into all strata of British life wherever a Catholic was to be found—among the industrial workmen, among the employers, in financial circles and even in the highest sections of the ruling caste. It was a power of this kind that the Centre wielded in Germany. We must understand this before we can attempt to find an explanation of some of the most fundamental characteristics of the Hitler movement.

When the War was over and the German Republic was founded at Weimar, Bavaria remained a self-governing State within the federal republic, its form of state government being changed from the monarchical to the republican. At heart the people remained monarchists. Only a very small minority of Prussians sighed for the return of Kaiser Wilhelm and the House of Hohenzollern. The other federal states did not weep over the departure of their kings and princes; but



Bavarian feeling as a whole remained loyal to the House of Wittelsbach. Though the last king, Ludwig III, was not personally popular, his son, Prince Rupprecht—who, by the way, is the Stuart Pretender to the throne of England—would have received the crown of Bavaria with popular acclaim if he had simply reached out his hand for it.

It was something more than the influence of traditional sentiment that kept the Bavarians loyal to the monarchical principle after the German Republic had been founded. They had never liked Prussia, and they liked Prussia now less than ever before; for the Prussian State was now under the full control of the international socialists. The German Federal Republic had been formed under the ægis of the socialists and was what the Protestant and Catholic leaders alike, but more especially the Catholic, called a "godless State."

Speaking of the new Republic at a Catholic mass meeting in Bavaria in 1922 Cardinal Faulhaber, the Archbishop of Munich, said: "Woe to the State that has drawn up its constitution without ever mentioning the name of God, the State whose laws favour easy divorce

and subsidise illegitimate parenthood. The revolution (*whereby the Republic was founded*) was an act of perjury and high treason and will go down in history signed with the mark of Cain." We shall understand the point of the final phrase later on. It refers to the campaign of defeatism which had been carried on along the home front during the second two years of the War.

Cardinal Faulhaber expressed fairly authentically the feeling of Catholic Bavaria towards the new Republic. And if we bear his words in mind we shall not be surprised at the benevolent neutrality of the Centre Party towards Hitler when the latter became Chancellor. Moreover, we must remember in this connection that the threat of Bolshevism loomed large on the eastern frontier, and that the godless Federal Republic seemed to offer a favourable bridgehead for its advance into western Europe. Add to this the fact that the Prussian State was largely at the mercy of organised forces which were proselytisers to atheism. In these circumstances it was only natural that the well-organised Catholic Church in Bavaria should look with misgiving towards the north.



In 1922 the Fascist march on Rome took place. In the January of 1923 the French invaded the Ruhr. The government printing machines in Berlin began to turn out marks by the hundred thousand million per second, until finally an English pound could be exchanged for three thousand million marks, instead of for twenty marks at the normal exchange. Chaos reigned throughout Germany. Nobody knew what the morrow would bring. And Bavaria began to think that it was time to save herself. She could be self-supporting and independent even if cut away from Prussia. This separatist feeling spread by leaps and bounds in 1923. It was then that Hitler and his friends decided to take Bavaria by storm and, with Bavaria as the starting-point, to lead a march on Berlin much as the generals of King Victor Emmanuel III had led the Fascist march on Rome.

Munich had been the chief asylum of refuge for the German militarists since the downfall of the Hohenzollern regime. Ludendorff was prominent in this group. He met Hitler and discussed with him a plan for organising a march on Berlin. With Hitler's followers and

the other Bavarian patriotic organisations behind him, Ludendorff boasted he could march on Berlin and capture the government from the socialists and then drive the French out of the Ruhr. Hitler listened to the General but kept his own counsel.

He realised that, though the Bavarians were by tradition unsympathetically disposed towards the Prussians, they were proud of being Germans. Indeed they have always claimed to be *echt deutsch* (pure German), while declaring the Prussians to be a mongrel race with a good dash of Tartar blood in their veins. Hitler, though of Bavarian stock from his father's side, admired the efficiency of Prussia and was convinced that it must remain an organic part of the German nation. The immediate problem now was to liberate Prussia from the yoke of the red internationalism and at the same time to arrest the Bavarian tendency towards separation.

This latter tendency had certain features which were very far-reaching in their implications. German-Austria was next-door neighbour to Bavaria. In German-Austria there were more than six millions of Germans, almost all of whom were Roman Catholics. If the



Bavarians seceded the danger was that they would amalgamate with the Austrians. This would mean the creation of a solid South German Catholic *bloc* which would have little sympathy with Protestant and infidel Prussia. Such an eventuality would have meant the political break-up of the German nation, and it was just this that the French were aiming at. As a matter of fact, French emissaries were sent to Munich to work up the separatist movement with moral and material encouragement. The French had also in their heads the idea of establishing an autonomous Rhineland which would be predominantly Roman Catholic. All this was part and parcel of Poincaré's and Clemenceau's dream for the dismemberment of Germany.

Hitler determined to turn the secessionist movement into a national crusade for the redemption of Prussia and thus bring about the salvation of Germany as a whole. It was a daring plunge. And though it failed just then, as the Easter Rising failed in Dublin in 1916, the first failure was only the birth-swoon of a movement which finally conquered the country. But we must not get ahead of our story.

In 1922-3 South Germany was honey-combed with patriotic societies which were called self-defence organisations (*Selbstschutzorganisationen*). These were in reality bodies of armed men many of whom had served in the trenches. Their purpose was to protect local interests in case the Marxist movement should assume Bolshevist dimensions and attempt to bring the whole of Germany under its heel. The political control of Prussia was entirely in the hands of the Marxists. Therefore it was only natural that the monarchist and Catholic South should strive to protect itself against the spread of international socialism from Prussia outwards.

For that purpose these local organisations were formed. They began in the Bavarian frontier town of Escherich and spread outwards from there. But they were local in their aims. The gravity centre of the country organisations was the parish pump, and that of the urban organisations the local town hall. How could these be galvanised with the spirit of a great national movement and inspired with the belief that, in the last resort, local interests could be efficiently protected only by entering into a



far-flung crusade for the liberation of the German people from the yoke of red internationalism? That was the problem which Adolf Hitler had now to face.

The position was a delicate and difficult one. Reporting on the situation, Dr. Gustav von Kahr, the Prime Minister of Bavaria, announced to General von Seeckt, the Commander-in-Chief of the Republican Army, that 90 per cent of the Bavarian people longed for the restoration of the Wittelsbach monarchy. Throughout Bavaria the flag of the German Republic was rarely seen. Three other flags were unfurled everywhere—the black-white-red of the Hohenzollern Empire, the white-and-blue of the Bavarian State and the Swastika of the Hitler Party. General von Lossow, the local chief of the Republican Army, ignored orders from headquarters in Berlin. The Bavarian Prime Minister refused to allow the Reichsbank to withdraw gold from Nürnberg. The Bavarian railways refused to obey general directions from Berlin. By the autumn of 1933 the separatist movement was on the verge of being an accomplished fact.

The man from Braunau was very busy in

those days. By the spring of 1923 he had turned all the able-bodied men of his party into armed fighting troops. They were joined by several of the other patriotic organisations. Hitler worked with untiring energy day and night. In this he has always been a puzzle to his friends and associates. No amount of work seems to tire him. He rushed from one city to another in South Germany, making speeches which sometimes lasted for hours, working himself up to a frenzy, perspiring from every pore, losing pounds of weight sometimes in one evening, yet fresh and off again by aeroplane or fast motor to the next town for another rally. He was the most prominent figure in that part of the German Fatherland. Wherever he passed the children and their elders cried out "*Heil, Hitler!*" Ambassadors came to him from foreign lands, generally from reactionary circles. Italy sent Captain Migliorati. The Grand Duke Cyril of Russia sent a diplomat named Bisupsky. Austria and Hungary and all the succession states of the former Habsburg Empire sent their envoys. But the upstart peasant from Braunau never lost his head. He was always modest and affable,



willing to listen and learn wherever and whenever he could. His immediate puzzle was how to work with his associates and win them to his plan. Dr. von Kahr, the Premier, was for separation and the re-establishment of the Bavarian monarchy. In this he was supported by General von Lossow, the local commander of the Republican Army, and by Colonel Seisser, the head of the Bavarian State Police.

Now Hitler was stoutly opposed to the monarchist and separatist movements. Since his early days in Vienna, where he learned to despise the House of Habsburg, he was convinced that the divine right of emperors and kings was a piece of nonsensical foolery in these modern times. The royal houses had no longer organic contact with the masses. The latter must throw up their own leaders, and the political leadership of the future must be broad-based on the popular will, but not in the popular will as expressed in the counting of votes. Hitler had another principle which he called the principle of aristocratic leadership, an aristocracy of talent in control of public life, something like the idea of a Tory democracy. Men like himself, like Masaryk,

like Mussolini, like Mustafa Kemal, were to be the leaders of the future. They would gather around them competent associates through their instinct for the selection of talent. And the masses would obey this leadership because the masses have an instinct for discerning the capable leader, just as the soldiers of Napoleon instinctively recognised and obeyed the military genius of their commander and his marshals. That is Hitler's idea of rulership.

In the late autumn of 1923 he assembled his forces on the northern Bavarian frontier. The idea was that they would commence their march to Berlin on November 8th, the vigil of the fifth anniversary of the Armistice. As a matter of fact some detachments were on the march by midnight. Hitler had not informed the Bavarian separatists of his plans. He thought that once the march had begun they would join him.

On the evening of November 8th there was a monster meeting in the hall of the Burgher Brewery of the Kaufinger Strasse. The audience was principally made up of the non-Hitlerite patriotic organisations. Premier von Kahr was on the platform delivering a prepared



address which was a sort of official *pronunciamiento* proclaiming the Bavarian secession. Hitler had decided to turn this meeting into a rally for the national crusade.

While von Kahr was speaking Hitler entered, accompanied by a strong bodyguard of his own troops. He fired his revolver at the ceiling and ordered the men on the platform to enter an adjacent room. Among those who thus obeyed the point of Hitler's revolver were Von Kahr, the Premier, Von Lossow, the local chief of the Republican Army, and Colonel von Seisser, the chief of the Bavarian State Police. Hitler read his "Proclamation to All the Germans." The names of Ludendorff, Hitler, Von Lossow and Seisser were appended to it. Ludendorff was to be Regent Governor of Germany, Hitler to be Chancellor, Von Lossow Minister of War and Von Seisser national Chief of Police. Such was the personnel of what Hitler styled the Provisional National Government. Ludendorff entered the hall as proceedings were going on. Hitler had planned this with him, for it was thought that if Ludendorff joined the crusade the Republican Army would not stand out against its old general.

Within two days large detachments of Hitler's storm-battalions closed in on Munich. But the local authorities deserted the Swastika. Von Lossow had brought out his men to block Hitler's way. Von Seisser was on the job with his police. The Nazi storm-troops marched in military formation through the city, Ludendorff and Hitler at their head. But when they reached the Odeonsplatz the barricades were up. The army obeyed the order to fire. Seventeen of the Hitlerites were killed. Hitler himself fell on the pavement and broke a collar-bone. Ludendorff stood up straight and walked with head erect in the direction of the soldiers. They opened a path for their former commander.

The march on Berlin was over. The Nazi organisation was officially disbanded. Hitler was arrested. In the following February he was brought to trial on a charge of high treason. He was condemned to five years' imprisonment in a fortress. It was while he was serving his sentence in the fortress of Landsberg that he wrote his autobiography, *Mein Kampf*. But he was released after eight months.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### MY STRUGGLE

HITLER's autobiography was written in the Bavarian fortress prison of Landsberg. It is entitled *My Struggle* (*Mein Kampf*). The book is very long, amounting to seven hundred and eighty-one closely printed pages. It is long-winded also and abounds in redundancies, as might naturally be expected from the first attempt at authorship on the part of a man whose only form of expression had hitherto been impromptu speech-making before popular audiences. In order to reach the mind of the populace through its ear Hitler knew the value of repetition. He often made speeches which lasted well over two hours—sometimes even three—and repeated the same idea over and over again until he found that it had been lodged firmly in the minds of his hearers.

Anyone who takes up *Mein Kampf* with the intention of reading it through will have to

## MY STRUGGLE

make himself aware of this fact at the very start, and will often have to remind himself of it while wading through the seven hundred and eighty-one pages. When the book was written Hitler was still far from the responsible *milieu* of the Treasury Bench, where a statesman has to consider the impression which his words will make when they come to be read in cold print next day. Hitler was still only what the Americans call a "soap-box orator"—even in his writing.

Yet *Mein Kampf* is by no means a worthless book. From one point of view it is a document of the highest importance; for it throws much light on the mystery of Hitler's rise to supreme political power in Germany. The book is frankly personal the whole way through. Though it abounds in long, didactic homilies on social, economic, political, religious, racial and ethical questions, these are all approached from the personal angle. Hitler tells the reader of his own reactions to this and that and the other social or political theory. These reactions of his have always arisen out of his own personal experiences. It is all told quite simply. His account, for instance, of his early days in Vienna



is just what one would expect from the peasant boy who had come up from a village on the Bavarian frontier to the big Austrian capital.

"Vienna," he writes, "was not merely the political and cultural centre of the old Danubian monarchy; it was also the economic centre. It held an army of high military officials, state bureaucrats, artists and men of learning. But these were far outnumbered by the great mass of manual workers. On one side there was the wealth of the aristocracy and commercial classes and, on the other, the most abject poverty. In front of the palaces on the Ring Strasse loitered thousands of the unemployed. And below this *via triumphalis* of the old Austria crowds of homeless people huddled for shelter under the arches of the canals.

"Probably there was no German city in which the social problem could be studied so well as in Vienna. But I must here sound a note of warning against the idea that this problem can be studied from above downwards. The man who has never been in the grip of this throttling viper will never know what its poison is. An attempt to study it in any other way will result only in superficial talk and sentimental delusions.

For my part, there was no temptation to study the social problem from the outside, because I had to live in the midst of it. Therefore the question for me was not that of studying the environment objectively, but rather of testing its effects on myself. Though the rabbit came through the ordeal of the operation sound and healthy this must not be taken as evidence of its harmlessness.

"At that time it was not very difficult for me to find work, because I was not skilled in any branch of labour. So I had to seek employment only as a helpmate or handyman looking for an occasional job to enable me to buy my daily bread.

"I soon came to realise that though work was easy to get it was also easy to lose. And the uncertainty of being able to earn a regular daily livelihood struck me as the darkest side of the situation in this new life that I had entered.

"Although skilled labour was not so frequently thrown idle on the streets, yet it was subject to the same fate as unskilled labour, for the lock-out and the strike left the skilled labourer without his bread.



"I was thrown about so much in the life of the Austrian metropolis that I experienced the workings of this fate in my own person and I felt the effect of it on my mind. First of all I realised how the rapid change from employment to unemployment and vice versa, involving violent fluctuations in earnings and expenditure, in many cases gradually destroyed the sense of thrift and also the capacity for regulating one's own expenditure in a reasonable way. The body appeared to grow accustomed to the vicissitudes of food and hunger, eating heartily in good times and going hungry in bad. Hunger deprives a man of the ability to lay out and follow a plan for rationing his expenditure on a regular scale when a spell of good-fortune returns. The deprivations that he has to endure must be compensated for by a sort of mental mirage in which he imagines himself eating heartily once again. And this dream develops into a morbid longing to bring the enforced abstinence to an end the moment work and wages turn up again. Therefore the moment the happy eventuality of work returns he forgets to regulate his luck and lives only for the day.

"Often there are wife and children at home. And it happens not seldom that these also become infected with the same carelessness, especially if the husband is good to them and wants to do the best he can for them and loves them in his own way and according to his own lights. The week's wages are spent at home in two or three days. The family eats and drinks together as long as the money lasts and at the end of the week they hunger together. Then the wife goes to the neighbours and borrows a little and runs up small debts with the local shopkeeper in an effort to pull through the lean days towards the end of the week. Finally they sit down together to the midday meal with meagre dishes in front of them. Often there is nothing more to eat. Then they sit together and talk together and make plans while they are hungry and dream of the happiness to come when pay-day arrives. And so the little children in their earliest years grow hardened in this misery."

Hitler goes on to tell of the life he shared with his fellow-workers during those days in Vienna. He became personally acquainted, he says, with many cases of homes and families



broken up through the inability of the working classes to endure this terrible economic uncertainty. When the husband could no longer bear the mental anxiety of it he sometimes turned to drink. In several cases even the wife did the same. This downfall was not due to any innate badness in the people themselves, but rather due to the system under which they lived. And there is no hope of righting matters by the palliatives of temporary charity. The evil has to be attacked in its root causes.

The iniquity of Marxist socialism, according to Hitler, principally consists in the fact that it exploits this evil for its own ends. The more miserable the masses become, and the more profound their degradation, the more easily can they be set against the middle and upper classes in the class warfare preached by Karl Marx. Hitler inveighs against the disruptive effect of this Marxist teaching. It disrupts the family and therefore disrupts the nation; for the nation is the giant organism of which the family is the vital cell. There is no such thing as community of class. The basic bond of community is that of blood. The father of a family, for instance, may be a carpenter or

mason and his son may have studied law or medicine and become a barrister or a physician. Therefore the son will belong to the professional class, and thus Marxism would set the father against the son. It is the same within the nation. A German carpenter cares more for a German physician than he does for an English carpenter. That doctrine is, of course, by no means new, and this simple expression of it sounds banal; but Hitler is by no means afraid of being banal. Three-fourths of the thought and talk of average folk is that.

How would national socialism deal with the evil? Hitler devoted about five hundred pages to answering that question. If socialism be looked upon as a movement for the betterment of the masses then Hitler is a socialist. But he holds that you cannot better the masses by waiting interminably for international co-operation. "Live, horse, and you'll get grass" might be taken as the motto that expresses the reality of Marxist socialism. Meanwhile the poor old horse is in his last agonies. So that even if Marxist socialism were theoretically sound it is impossible in practice. Only by setting the ideal of the nation above the ideal



of class, and by educating both the classes and the masses under the ægis of that ideal, will it be possible to bring about that fundamental transformation in the life of the masses which is necessary to make them prosperous and therefore contented citizens. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler devotes several pages to the elucidation of this idea. He calls it the nationalisation of the masses. In practice it means that a prosperous nation cannot exist without a prosperous working class. The policeman and the civil servant and the soldier are generally loyal and devoted to their country because they are assured a livelihood, in the shape of a pension, at the end of their days. We can never have a contented nation, Hitler claims, until we can give something like the same assurance to the working man.

What forces can bring about this consummation which is so devoutly to be wished? It can never be brought about, the Nazi leader claims, as long as we cling to the parliamentary system of government. This system is in itself not only futile and feckless but iniquitous in principle. He first realised its futility and iniquity when he attended the sessions of the

Austrian Parliament in Vienna. What he witnessed made him laugh; but he at first thought that the ridiculousness of the situation was due to the peculiar composition of the Austrian Parliament itself. There were Poles and Czechs and Yugoslavs and Germans, and one-fourth of the deputies did not understand the languages in which the other three-fourths addressed the House.

"After a year of silent observation," writes Hitler, "I entirely changed my first impression of this institution. I found myself no longer in opposition to the distorted form which the parliamentary idea had taken in Austria. No. It was parliament as such that I could no longer abide. A whole array of questions came up in my mind.

"I began with a serious consideration of the democratic principle of the majority vote, the foundation on which the whole system rests. At the same time, however, I made a close study of the mental and moral qualities of these deputies whom the nation had chosen. The result was that I came to understand not only the institution itself but also its representatives.

"The democracy of the West was the forerunner of Marxism. Without the former the



latter would be unthinkable. It was democracy that first furnished this world pest with a breeding ground from which it might spread. The parliament was the outer expression of this democracy.

"The first thing that set me thinking along this line was the patent lack of responsibility on the part of the individual. Parliament might pass certain measures, and no matter how destructive the application of them might turn out to be nobody could be called to account. When an unparalleled catastrophe occurs does the government which has caused it assume responsibility by merely resigning? Can a fluctuating majority of men ever be made responsible? When we talk of responsibility isn't it clear that this must be referred to the individual? But in practice can the leader of a government be called to account for conduct which has been initiated and carried through on the number of assenting voices which champion it? Instead of bringing forward constructive ideas and plans is it the task of a first-class statesman to make his suggestions understandable to a sheepfold of duffers with a view to securing their assent?"

Yet Hitler would not supplant the parliamentary system with an absolute monarchy. He would supplant it by what he calls the principle of aristocratic rulership, which I have referred to elsewhere.

A very readable anthology might be garnered from Hitler's book. This anthology would have to be grouped under an infinite variety of headings. Religion, morals, public hygiene, art, literature, sociology, politics, the art of demagoguery, the value of sport, the art of propaganda, the art of conducting public meetings, the art of speech-making—he writes of all these things with an air of unquestionable authority. Indeed that is the main charm of his book.

On the art of conducting public meetings and speech-making he gives some shrewd pointers which may be referred to here in the interests of our own demagogues.

There must be a hefty bodyguard, he warns. Should mentally extraneous elements happen to enter the meeting and make interruptions these must be flung out mercilessly. Once the chairman has commanded attention for a speaker there must be no heckling or questioning. A public meeting is not a debating



society. If the speaker has an idea that is worth putting forward he must plug it home by repeated blows through the thick skulls of his hearers. He must speak with the voice of one in absolute authority, of one whose faith in himself and his theory is so strong that he cannot brook any contradiction. The mob cannot be won over by an appeal to the individual reason but rather by an appeal to the irrational element in the mass. And for that reason meetings had better be held always in the evening, because the individual reason is too much alive during the daytime. Towards night, when it is approaching its hour of abdication in sleep, it is far more plastic to the touch of the orator. In this connection Hitler digresses to give a lesson to theatrical producers. Matinées are always a risk, and the reputation of a play should never be staked on them.

"How difficult it is," he writes, "to overthrow and replace the critical spirit that arises from emotional prejudices, with its accompanying sentiment and convictions. On how many imponderable influences and causes success depends—this can be estimated only by the acutely sensitive speaker. He will realise that

even the time of day in which he delivers his oration may have a striking influence on its effect. The same speech by the same speaker on the same theme will produce a different effect in the forenoon from that which it will produce at three o'clock in the afternoon or in the evening.

"This is not to be wondered at. Anyone who witnesses a theatrical production in the afternoon and the same production again in the evening at eight o'clock will be astonished at the difference in the effect and the influence. A man of refined feeling, who also has the faculty of forming a clear judgment of the effect which is produced in himself, will readily see that the impression which is made by an afternoon performance is never so great as that which is made in the evening. The same is true of the cinema. And it is important to bear this in mind, because there is sometimes a tendency to think that actors do not take so much trouble with their work in the afternoon. The cinema is the same in the afternoon as at nine o'clock in the night.

"In all these cases there is question of influencing the freedom of the human will.



And this is specially true where meetings are held for the purpose of winning over contradictory wills to one's cause and supplanting the formerly cherished opinion with a new one. In the morning, and indeed throughout the daytime, the will power is energetic and stoutly reacts against the attempt made on the part of another will to subordinate it. But in the evening it is not so wakeful. Public meetings are always a struggle between opposing wills. The art of the orator when exercised by one who has the spirit of an apostle will find it easier to win over men to the acceptance of a new opinion when their resistance is sluggish rather than when they are in alert control of the reasoning powers and the will."

I have quoted from the ninth edition of *Mein Kampf*, which was issued in the spring of 1933. How is it that such a book has run into so many large editions and has been sold by the hundred thousand? The answer is clear enough to one who reads even part of it and bears in mind the conditions which have existed in Germany since the War, but more especially since 1929, when the American loans ceased

and the country began to sink economically. In his speeches Hitler has the knack of bringing people to trust him no matter what his theories may be. In his book he contrives to diffuse the same kind of atmosphere; so that it reads almost like a stenogramme of his talk. Here undoubtedly is the secret of its appeal.

Hitler has remained a simple peasant, with the peasant's outlook on life. As such he is a striking contrast to the men who have ruled Germany since the War. For the most part these have been learned men. Almost all of them were university graduates, many of whom had taken their doctorates *summa cum laude*. But they turned out feckless as political administrators. The youth movement in Germany was an exodus from the life of the city to the fresh air and folk-traditions of the countryside. Those who started the movement have now grown up. And the majority of them are national socialists. They have brought back from the countryside what they went out to find. *Mein Kampf* seems to be accepted as their gospel. And it could not be that if it were a sophisticated literary production.



## CHAPTER SIX

### THE TWENTY-FIVE POINTS

ON the 9th of November 1923 the National Socialist Party was disbanded by order of the Bavarian Government. That was immediately after the "March on Berlin" had collapsed in Munich. The funds and property of the party were confiscated. Hitler estimates the material loss thus sustained at £7,500. (*Mein Kampf*, p. 669.)

On April 1st 1924 he entered the prison of Landsberg to serve his sentence of five years. In the following December he was released, having served only eight months. It was said at the time that the Vatican authorities had used their influence in his favour, not merely to procure his release but also to make the release unconditional, so that he should be at liberty to resume his political activities. The most authoritative writer who has definitely vouched for the authenticity of this story is

## THE TWENTY-FIVE POINTS

Count Reventlow, who joined the Nazi movement in 1927 and has written a massive book about Hitler and his work. In this book, *Der Weg zum neuen Deutschland*, Reventlow states (p. 261) that he delayed his entry into the Nazi Party for two years because he feared that Hitler, who had purchased his liberty at the price of submitting to the will of the Roman Church, would simply act as the Pope's political emissary in Germany. After two years, however, it was clear that the Nazi leader was entirely independent of any sinister influence from Rome, and so Reventlow joined the party.

The story of Vatican intervention in Hitler's favour is not quite so far-fetched as it may seem at first. Probably it was not literally true, but we shall see in a subsequent chapter that there were certain profound and significant reasons which could be advanced in favour of its credibility.

When Hitler came out of jail he immediately set himself to the task of rallying the scattered elements of his political following and building up the party anew. "It will take me five years," he said, "to reconstruct the party."



The ruling authorities were at first somewhat perturbed at the audacity of the ex-convict. But they decided not to interfere with his doings. Otherwise they would have given him only the publicity for which he yearned. He says somewhere in his autobiography that if a public man examines the papers when he gets up in the morning and finds them resonant with his praise he may be sure that what he did yesterday was a bad day's work. That is typical of Hitler. He has always thrived on opposition.

The general decision now was to take little or no notice of him. The papers ignored him. The government authorities believed that he could never again build up his party. The whole situation in Germany had changed profoundly while Hitler was under lock and key. The French had marched out of the Ruhr. Germany had been received into the League of Nations. The Locarno Treaties were being negotiated. American loans had begun to pour lavishly into the Fatherland. With the return of prosperity the voice of the turbulent political agitator was doomed to fall on indifferent ears. His day is over, the wiseacres said.

He is like a broken-down tenor, they declared, tormenting the ears of a queue outside the doors of the theatre where a new star is billed to appear. Gustav Stresemann was the new political star. With his policy of fulfilling the Versailles Treaty on the basis of the Dawes Plan he was the pillar of fire destined to lead the German people out of the wilderness.

But the man from Braunau thought otherwise. One of the main planks in the original programme of the national socialist party was the emancipation of the German people from their enslavement to the moneylender. He called this plank "the breaking of interest servitude"; or, rather, that was the name given to it by Gottfried Feder, who drew up the party programme for Hitler.

The policy which Hitler now followed in reconstructing his party was somewhat different from that adopted in the earlier stages. The idea of a military *coup d'état* was henceforth out of the question. A fiasco like that of the "March on Berlin" could not be risked again. So Adolf Hitler decided to adopt a purely constitutional plan of campaign. The political education of the masses was to be his ideal.



He had a party programme which he now put forward as the gospel that he and his associates would preach, not merely in Bavaria but throughout the whole Reich.

This brings us to the Nazi political programme. It was drawn up by a young engineer named Gottfried Feder and accepted by Hitler. Feder was already a member of the German Labour Party when Hitler joined, and Hitler gives him full credit for having furnished the party with its programme. Feder was appointed Minister of Commerce when Hitler took over the chancellorship in 1933.

The Nazi programme, as drawn up by Feder and declared by Hitler in 1926 to be sacrosanct and unalterable, is divided into twenty-five sections which run as follows :

1. We claim that all Germans must be united in one Great Germany, this claim being based on the right of national self-determination.
2. We claim full recognition of the right of the German people to stand on an equal footing with other nations. Therefore we call for the abolition of the Peace Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain.
3. We demand territory and soil (colonies) to furnish the supplies which our people need and to admit

- of the overseas settlement of our surplus population.
4. Only those who are compatriots can be citizens of the State. They alone are compatriots who are of German blood, no distinction of religious creed being made. Therefore no Jew can be looked upon as a compatriot.
  5. He who is not a German citizen can live in Germany only as a guest and will be subject to special laws for the government of aliens.
  6. Only citizens of the State have the right to vote on the government and laws of the State. Therefore we demand that every public office of every kind, whether it appertain to the Reich or one or other of the federal states or the municipalities, must be held only by a citizen of the State. We are strenuously opposed to the corrupt parliamentary custom of apportioning places exclusively according to party affiliations without any regard to the character or fitness of the candidates.
  7. We demand that the State shall recognise as one of its principal duties the task of providing work and the means of livelihood for the citizens of the State. In case it should be found impossible to supply food to the whole population actually living within the confines of the State those who are of foreign nationality (non-citizens) must be expatriated.
  8. All further immigration of non-Germans is to be prevented. We demand that those non-Germans who have entered Germany since August 2nd,



- 1914, shall be immediately forced to leave the country.
9. All citizens of the State have the same rights and the same duties.
  10. The first duty of every citizen of the State must be productive labour, either mental or manual. The work in which the individual is engaged must not be pursued to the detriment of the general interests but must be carried out in such a way as to fit into the framework of the national effort as a whole and be of service to the commonweal.
  11. Therefore we demand the abolition of all income which has involved no work or effort on the part of the individual, and we demand emancipation from the slavery of interest charges.
  12. In view of the tremendous sacrifices of property and blood which every war demands of the people, all personal enrichment through the fortunes of war must be looked upon as a crime against the people. Therefore we ask for complete confiscation of all war profits.
  13. We demand the nationalisation of all business combines (trusts).
  14. We demand that the principle of profit-sharing be introduced in all big business firms.
  15. We ask for the establishment of broad and comprehensive measures for the care of old age.
  16. We demand that a sound middle class be built up and sustained. We ask for the immediate municipalisation of the big department stores and the letting of their various sections to small

- traders at cheap rents, all small trading concerns to be kept under the sharpest surveillance in the delivery of goods to the State, the provinces or the municipalities.
17. We demand the adoption of a programme of land reform which will correspond to our national needs and also the enactment of a law for the cession of free lands for common use. We demand the abolition of ground rents and the prevention of all kinds of speculation in real estate.
  18. We call for a ruthless campaign against those whose activities run counter to the common interests. Public oppressors, usurers and profiteers are to be punishable with death, irrespective of creed and race.
  19. We demand the enactment of a system of German Common Law to replace the Roman code, which is based on the protection of the material order of things.
  20. A fundamental reconstruction of the whole system of public education must be undertaken by the State, so that every capable and industrious German may receive the benefits of a higher education and therewith the competency to take his place in the leadership of the nation. The curricula of all educational institutions must correspond to the practical necessities of life. A knowledge of what the State stands for must be inculcated in the school (instruction in citizenship) from the first moment that children are



capable of understanding. We demand that specially gifted children of poor parents should have their talents fully drawn out and developed without any consideration of position or profession or cost to the State.

21. In order to improve the physical well-being of the people the State must exercise its guardianship over mother and child and forbid child labour. It must develop the bodily powers of the race by legally establishing an obligatory system of gymnastics and athletic games, and by supporting in every way all those societies that have to do with the physical training of the youth.
22. We demand the abolition of a paid soldiery and the establishment of a people's army.
23. We demand that legal measures should be adopted against intentional political chicanery and the promulgation of political falsehoods on the part of the press. In order to make possible the building up of a German press we demand that :
  - (a) Editorial staffs and correspondents of papers which appear in the German language must be of German nationality.
  - (b) Non-German newspapers must have the express sanction of the State for their publication. They must not be printed in the German language.
  - (c) All financial participation in the German press and all attempts to influence it on the

part of non-German journals must be forbidden by law. Wherever this law is infringed we call for the closing down of the newspaper firm in question, as punishment for the infringement, and the immediate expulsion from the Reich of all non-German employees in such a concern. Journals that run counter to public interest must be forbidden.

We invoke legal measures for the suppression of every kind of art and literature which may have a disintegrating influence in the life of our people. And we demand the closing down of such institutions whose policy runs counter to the aforementioned requirements.

24. We demand freedom of worship for all religious bodies within the state, insofar as they do not threaten its stability or run counter to the ethical and moral sentiment of the German people. The Party as such stands for a positive Christianity, without binding itself to any particular denomination. It is strenuously opposed to the materialist influences of the Jewish mind within and without the Party. And the Party is convinced that a permanent restoration of our people can be affected only from within, on the principle of placing the commonweal before private weal.
25. For the realisation of all the above-mentioned



demands a strong central political government of the Reich is necessary, with absolute authority of the Central Parliament over the whole Reich and its organisations in general. Finally we demand the formation of chambers corresponding to the different social grades and professions to administer in the federal states those sections of the general polity which lie outside the laws that govern the Reich as a whole.

The leader of the Party vouches that he will fight fearlessly and ruthlessly for the foregoing demands and defend them with the sacrifice of his life.

Such is the gospel of the National Socialist Party. The first observation to be made on it, by way of comment, is that this programme is expressly not intended to be put into practice all at once. It represents an ideal goal which can never be finally reached but which is a guiding star to those who are striving in that direction. Here is what Hitler himself says about the Party programme (*Mein Kampf*, pp. 229-31) :

“ It is not the business of the political theorist (*Programmatiker*) to set forth a thing according to its various grades of practicability. His

business is to give a clear statement of the thing itself. This means that he must look to the end rather than the means. And it is thus that the fundamental justness of an idea must be ascertained rather than by taking into consideration the difficulty of carrying it out in practice. When the political theorist brings the criterion of *means-to-an-end* and *reality* into his reckoning instead of the absolute truth itself he is not true to his calling. Instead of being a guiding star to the yearning eyes of mankind he becomes a dispenser of recipes for daily use. The theorist of a movement must always hold up to view the aim of the movement, while it is the business of the politician to strive towards the fulfilment of that aim. Thus the thought of the one is directed towards the eternal truth itself, whereas the conduct of the other must be dictated by the ever-present practical reality. The greatness of the one is to be sought in the abstract justness of his idea, that of the other must be judged by his capacity to make useful application of it to the practical things of life. The politician must work in the light of the aim set out by the theorist. The work of a politician must be estimated by the success which his



plans and his acts achieve ; but the realisation of a whole programme drawn up by the theorist can never be accomplished. And this is because such absolute fulfilment is bound to fall short on account of the general limitations of human understanding and human conduct, although the human mind itself can grasp the absolute truth and see the goal clearly. The more abstractly just and therefore the more powerful the idea is the more impossible will it be to bring such an idea to full realisation as long as we are dealing with human beings. Therefore the worth of a political theorist must not be measured by the degree to which his ideas have proved themselves capable of realisation, but rather according to the influence which they exercise on the development of mankind. If it were otherwise, then the founders of religions could never be reckoned among the great men of history, because their views have never been fully, or even approximately, carried out in practice. Even the Religion of Love (Christianity) turns out in practice to be only a pale reflex of the Will of its revered Founder. Its significance and worth lies in the direction which it has

given to the cultural and moral evolution of mankind.

“The vast difference between the task of the theorist and that of the politician is the reason why these two talents are rarely found in the same person. The more the politician holds himself free from the thralldom of great ideas the more easy and more fruitful and more expedite, as well as more evident, will be his success.”

That is not only an illuminating comment on the National Socialist programme but also on Hitler himself. It explains much that would be otherwise inexplicable in the narrative of Hitler's progress. We shall now turn to a more detailed consideration of some of the more outstanding among these famous twenty-five points.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HITLER'S POLITICAL CREED

THE twenty-five points, according to Hitler, constitute a luminous goal which lights up the way of the Nazi movement. The goal itself, he says, will never be reached. But its radiance is the inspiration of every effort that he and his followers make. It is like the illuminating grace of the theologians.

But this scintillating mosaic of twenty-five points is not uniformly luminous in all its parts. There are sections of it which can be seen in their proper light only from a chosen angle of vision. I shall indicate a few of these.

Point II, which calls for the abolition of unearned income and the "breaking of the interest slavery" is looked upon by Hitler as indicating a cardinal principle of his political philosophy. Yet this very point has been almost universally held up to ridicule by outside critics. The distinction between loan

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capital and industrial capital, which is the basis that the principle rests on, has been branded as nonsensical. Another alleged piece of incomprehensible nonsense is Point 19, which demands "the enactment of a system of German Common Law to replace the Roman code, which is based on the protection of the material order of things." These are only two examples taken at random from those parts of the programme which are said to be incomprehensible when they are not plainly nonsensical.

This criticism, I think, arises from the rather prevalent habit of judging political doctrines and systems according to abstract and universal canons of what is right and just and practical. But it is a serious error to judge the political measures enacted in another country by the light of conditions existent in one's own land.

Let me give a homely example of the misunderstandings which are likely to arise from this initial mistake. Suppose for instance, the Nazis passed a law compelling all German public-houses to close their doors at midnight or half an hour afterwards. The anti-alcohol cranks in Germany would probably rejoice at this curtailment of popular liberty, for most



German beer-halls and cafés remain open until one in the morning and many of them until half-past two or three o'clock. If the same law were enacted by the British Parliament, British democrats might be found rejoicing at this expansion of their liberties. So that the same measure would have an utterly different significance in Germany from that which it would have in England.

Certain provisions of the Nazi programme would have no meaning whatsoever in England or America—that, for example which calls for “the enactment of a system of German Common Law to replace the Roman code, which is based on the protection of the material order of things.” But that demand has a very practical meaning in Germany, especially when it is studied within the framework of the fundamental principles on which the political philosophy of national-socialism rests. I shall try, therefore, to interpret the more difficult sections of the programme in the light of the particular circumstances to which they are meant to respond.

The first three points are clear enough. But it may be well to remark here in regard to

point 1 that it only re-states Bismarck's ideal of a complete Germany (*Ganz Deutschland*). It is also a simple re-statement of a principle which the Allied and Associated Powers insistently proclaimed as one of their chief war aims. That principle is the right of a people to choose its own political regime. This was called the right of national self-determination. Now there are upwards of six millions of Germans in what is called German-Austria. Yet the Treaty of Versailles forbids these Germans to vote for political union with the German Fatherland. In claiming that the German-Austrians have the right to belong to Germany if they wish so to declare themselves, Hitler only re-vindicates a traditional German policy and a principle which was a sort of sacred rallying cry of the Allies during the War.

When we come to Articles 4 and 5 we are face to face with the most contentious of all the Nazi claims—the exclusion from citizenship of those who are not of German blood, especially the Jews. We must pass this stumbling-block by for the moment, because it will come up for special consideration in a later chapter. Articles 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are clear enough in their



meaning, whether we agree or disagree with the principles on which they are based.

The eleventh article presents the first formidable and almost impassable barrier to the understanding of the average outsider. This is the claim for the abolition of all income which is not the direct or indirect product of individual effort, mental or manual. The last part of the article reiterates this in the phrase "*Brechung der Zinsknechtschaft*"—literally, the breaking of the interest slavery. The mere verbal translation is meaningless, as is very often the case if an attempt be made at a verbatim translation of German compound words. We shall at least get at the surface meaning of the expression if we translate it: "Emancipation from the slavery of interest charges on borrowed capital."

A great deal has been written in Germany about the economic principle which underlies this eleventh article. Feder, who is the actual author of the wording of the Nazi programme, has been held up to ridicule, especially by foreign journalists. Yet Hitler avows that this is the most important plank in his programme for the economic independence and freedom of the German nation.

"As I listened to Gottfried Feder's first speech on *The Breaking of the Interest Slavery*," Hitler writes, "I saw immediately that here we had an abstract truth which must necessarily be of immense significance for the future of the German people. The absolute divorce of stock exchange capital from the economic life of the nation makes it possible to oppose the process of internationalisation in German commerce without at the same time attacking capital as such, for the latter would jeopardise the foundations of our national independence. I clearly saw what was developing in Germany and I realised then that the stiffest fight we would have to wage would not be against hostile nations but against international capital. In Feder's speech I found an effective rallying cry for our coming struggle.

"The fight against international finance and loan capital has become the most important objective in the campaign which the German nation is waging for its economic freedom and independence" (*Mein Kampf*, pp. 232, 233).

Feder made a clear distinction between what he called industrial capital and loan capital. To understand the point of this distinction we



must first bear in mind the fact that the English practice according to which the public directly invest their money in joint-stock companies is not at all widespread in Germany.

Limited liability companies are of course quite prevalent in Germany, as in every other modern country, and the company law is fundamentally not very different from our own. But in practice German financial methods are quite different. The banks hold large blocks of shares in commercial and industrial enterprises—that is to say, speculative investments. When a commercial crisis arises the banks immediately feel the effect and become rocky. In other words, a wave of trade depression affects them immediately. That is what brought about the disastrous bank crash of 1931. The great Danat Bank was the first to smash, and its smash sent the others tottering. The Danat Bank was directly involved in big commercial undertakings, such as the Patzenhofer Brewery, the largest beer factory in the world, and had to close its doors when the shares of those companies collapsed on the market.

The influx of American loans, from 1925 to 1929, encouraged the banks in these

speculative schemes. Most of the German banks are under Jewish control, generally with family connections in the banking world of the U.S.A. Therefore if this custom were allowed to develop unchecked it would eventually place German industry and trade at the mercy of foreign finance.

Perhaps the most glaring evil that arose in this connection was the wholesale mortgaging of land property on the part of the banks in consideration for loans at high interest. From 1927 onwards the steady decline in prices made it difficult for land-owners to pay running expenses and at the same time to provide for the payment of interest on their mortgages. The same occurred in the case of residential and business properties in the cities. This universal indebtedness gathered over the country like a cloud of despair during 1929 and 1930, and finally burst into a deluge in the summer of 1931. In a desperate and short-sighted rush to save themselves the banks called in their overdrafts and peremptorily foreclosed mortgages. Economic chaos spread throughout the country under the hammer of forced auctions. And the general result was that German real estate



was knocked down wholesale at a price which barely covered the amount of the first mortgages. These mortgages averaged about 40 per cent of the official valuation.

The circumstances did not call for any great financial genius to foretell this state of affairs once the American loans began to flood the country. That is why Hitler declared in 1926 that his programme was absolutely unalterable in its details. He was then only in the first stages of reconstructing the party, and he could well afford to bide his time. He seems to have gauged the future pretty well when he declared that he would build up the party in five years. That declaration was made in the beginning of 1925. In 1930 the financial disaster was already looming on the horizon. And the Hitler Party gained a hundred and twelve parliamentary seats at the General Election held in the September of that year.

But we must not anticipate. Before going any further it ought to be pointed out here that a characteristic of Hitler's mentality is to seek the principle which has been violated when he finds himself face to face with an evil that calls for a radical cure. With the

simple and direct insight of the peasant he seems to have little faith in the practice of doctoring merely the symptoms of a disease. The first urge is to revindicate the principle of healthy living and bring it back into practice.

In the political or economic world this means the restoration of first principles. And when first principles have to be stated the statement must necessarily be in general terms. Hitler considers that the distinction between money-lending for its own sake and the direct investment of one's personal savings in productive undertakings amounts to a first principle of national economics. That same distinction was made by writers on Christian ethics at the time of the Renaissance. Christians were forbidden to indulge in the practice of moneylending for its own sake as being immoral and against the general interest. It was thus that the practice fell, almost exclusively, into the hands of the Jews. Hitler learned this when he was studying the literature of Christian Socialism in Vienna. In their own dim and religious insight the mediaevalists had obviously espied a sound principle in national economics. At least so Hitler thinks.



Points 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 are clear enough in their meaning. Though they imply a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist principle as we now have it in western Europe we are familiar enough with the arguments on which these claims are based. They have been put forward over and over again, in one shape or another, by various writers on Socialism.

Points 17, 18 and 19, form one general claim which is brought to a head in the statement: "We demand the enactment of a system of German Common Law to replace the Roman code which is based on the protection of the material order of things."

What does that mean? We have not space here for a detailed explanation. The best that I can do will be to indicate in a general way the circumstances in Germany that called for a radical revision of the existing code. I do not suggest that the political reaction to these circumstances is the same all over Germany. I am concerned here only with the national-socialist reaction.

Most of the European legal codes are based upon what is generally called the Common Law of Europe. This in turn is derived from the

Roman code. Now, in the Roman code one of the basic concepts is the *Jus ad Rem*, the right of the individual over the thing he possesses. This right involves liberty of disposal according to the will of the individual. If I purchase a motor-car, for instance, and pay for it in full, I am quite at liberty to smash it with a sledge-hammer to suit my own whim, or to sell it for a five-pound note to the next man I meet in the street who may be the lucky possessor of that amount of money. This right also extends to the ownership of land; for in the Roman code land was looked upon as the absolute property of the individual, just as his slaves and his house were. Now, when we speak of *land*, and mean by it the soil of one's country, then the land assumes a new value, which arises from the historical connection of a people with the soil. This is what the Nazis would call a spiritual value, and it is not taken into account in the materialistic concept of the Roman code. Such is the sense of Point 19, which I have quoted.

What is its practical implication as a political measure? The answer to this has been already suggested in describing the bank crash of 1931.



The revisionary aim of the Nazis is to prevent the forces of international finance, as embodied in the banks and other impersonal agencies, from disposing of German territory without taking into account the general interests of the people. The national socialists declare that in cases where landed estates are so heavily mortgaged as to make it impossible for the owner to work them the ground would be taken from the owner and put into cultivation by being given to settlers. Those estates, however, which are still operative will be allowed to carry on; but the mere materialistic legal right of a mortgagee will not be allowed to be exercised when it runs counter to the common interest.

Points 20, 21, 22 and 23 do not call for any special comment. The remaining points of the programme will come up for consideration under the treatment of the racial and religious problems in subsequent chapters.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## HITLER AND THE CHURCHES

THE scene is in the fortress of Landsberg on the river Lech, in Bavaria—to be exact, in that quarter of the fortress separated from the common prison and used only for political convicts. In a well-lighted room, with large windows guarded by strong iron bars, a man sits at a writing-table. On the table are heaps of open letters, memoranda, scraps of paper, books and torn envelopes; for this convict is allowed to receive letters from the outside world and is the recipient of a heavy daily post.

Nor is he clad in convict garb. He wears a Bavarian sports-jacket of rough green material, with leather buttons and collar made of green felt. He has a soft shirt and inner collar, with neatly knotted tie. Beneath the table one notices the legs bare at the knee, for the man wears a pair of hunter's "shorts" and long



woollen stockings. He is well groomed, his face clean-shaven except for a small tuft of black bristle on the upper lip under the nostrils. This is Adolf Hitler, and he is writing his autobiography. There isn't much of autobiography to it, however; it is rather the story of his mental experiences, a narrative of the chief thoughts that have passed through his mind since he was a boy. He is now thirty-five.

In summoning up the past a memory comes to him which seems to stir him deeply. His face takes on a wistful look. He recalls his childhood days among the devoutly religious Austrian peasants of Braunau. He sees the symbol of Christianity crowning every hill and hillock and wayside mount. Those were days of peace, among a simple and God-loving people who toiled without murmur against a master, loved their neighbours and helped them in every distress, went to Mass on Sundays in a spirit of inner happiness which their unquestioning faith gave them and said "*Grüss Gott*" ("The blessing of God be upon you") every time they entered a house or met an acquaintance or a chance stranger on

the road. In those days Adolf Hitler did not know that there were such people as Protestants or Infidels or Jews in the world. To be a Christian meant to be a Catholic. Jews were some strange race of people that lived long ago and crucified the Saviour of mankind.

What a pity, Hitler thinks, that all of Germany is not united in the one creed. This is Germany's tragedy—the cleavage caused by the Protestant Reformation which rent the national culture in twain. He writes at length of the tragedy of the All-German movement and the *Kulturkampf* under Bismarck, when the attempt was made to sever the Catholic Church in Germany from its obedience to Rome—and failed miserably. It turned its own weapon against itself in so far as it forced the Catholics to form themselves into a political party for their own political defence. Hence the Centre Party, which in the post-War period joined hands with the Marxist Socialists in defence of the Weimar republic, because the political tradition of German Catholicism was to stand in opposition to the Protestant junkerdom of Prussia. And now it has come to pass, Hitler says to himself, that the Infidel and the Jew



have been helped into political control and maintained there by German Catholics, while Prussian Protestantism is pushed aside and the uprising generation in Prussia is becoming predominantly godless. This means that Prussia is being spiritually prepared for the inroads of Bolshevism.

The man in the green sports-jacket writes page after page on this theme (*Mein Kampf*, pp. 125-127, 292-5, 379, 628-32).

"We are only reaping to-day what the past has sown. All these symptoms of decay are ultimately attributable to the absence of a definite and uniformly accepted philosophy of life. And from this too arises the general incapacity to form a ready and definite judgment on the everyday problems of life or to take a decisive stand towards them. Beginning with the first years of our education we are accustomed to half-measures and to chopping and changing our views, until finally we are feckless enough to tolerate even what we recognise as vicious.

"The increasing bitterness of the war waged against the fundamentals of religious teaching laid down by the churches is another phenomenon that has to be taken account of. Without

these principles religious belief can have no stable footing in the human mind. The broad mass of the nation is not made up of philosophers. For the masses faith is the only possible foundation for a moral outlook on life. Various substitutes have been put forward; but they have in no way proved of such practical worth as to justify the abandonment of traditional religious beliefs. Once religious doctrine and faith are a widespread reality among a people, then the absolute authority of the articles of that faith is the basis of every reality. To attack religious teaching as such is almost the same thing as to attack the general basic laws on which the State rests. This would finally lead to complete social anarchy, just as the former would lead to a hopeless kind of religious nihilism.

"The most wicked destruction of all is that which follows on the misuse of religious convictions for political ends. It is not possible to speak strongly enough against those miserable profiteers who turn to religion as a means of furthering their political or business interests. These shameless hypocrites bawl and shout their profession of faith in the ears of the whole



world, so that all the other sinners may hear. And this is done not when there is any call to proclaim one's faith openly even to the point of being ready to die for it, but they do it when they see a chance of making a better living by it. In consideration for some political recompense they will betray the interests of the religion they profess. For ten parliamentary seats they enter an alliance with the Marxists, who are the sworn enemies of all religion. And for a seat in the Cabinet they will enter into wedlock with the devil himself, if the remnant of a sense of honour did not warn him to keep wide of them.

"In pre-war Germany the following of a religion in daily life was rendered distasteful to many because of the misuse which the so-called 'Christian' political parties had made of Christianity and because of the shameful way in which the Catholic religion became identified with a political party. This lowering of religion to base uses gained a few worthless parliamentary seats and brought serious damage to the Church.

"The whole nation has had to suffer the consequences; because this disintegration of the religious element in everyday life happened

at a time when a weakness of attitude and insecurity and scepticism about everything began to set in, and when traditional moral standards had broken down.

"Even these rifts and wounds in the social body would not have turned out dangerous so long as we did not have to withstand any special trouble; but they were bound to become pernicious under the weight of the tragedy which fell upon us and which demanded internal solidarity on the part of the nation to hold out and resist" (*Mein Kampf*, pp. 294, 295).

All this is not mere theorising. We shall see its practical bearing if we first take a glance at the condition of Protestantism in Prussia since the fall of the monarchy, and then consider the political development of the Catholic Centre Party during the same period. This is absolutely necessary if we would understand at least the background of much that has happened in Germany since Hitler took over political control.

Protestantism in Germany has remained Protestant since the Lutheran revolt. There



has been no ritualistic or Romeward tendency, as there has been in England, and there has been no serious attempt to organise the German Protestant Church on a hierarchical foundation. Prussia was the great Protestant State within the Reich, and the Prussian Evangelical Church was the historical embodiment of the Lutheran revolt. In its external organisation it was a department of the State, with the King of Prussia as supreme bishop. When he disappeared in 1918 his action was tantamount to the abdication of the hierarchy of the Evangelical Church.

The Church was forthwith separated from the State, and had to share the fate of all the other institutions which drew their prestige directly from the monarchy. In pre-War days the Evangelical Church was held in esteem not merely as a religious institution but also, and perhaps even more so, because it was the embodiment of statal and patriotic ideals. With the founding of the Republic these ideals lost their lustre. The Socialists dominated Prussia. They were anti-national and carried on a political propaganda that was chiefly directed towards a renunciation of Prussian traditions.

It was not possible for the Evangelical Church to counter this opposition by offering any tangible benefits to the masses of the people. Before the War the Prussian Church had a highly organised system of social services supported voluntarily and staffed from ecclesiastical sources. The funds and personnel of these institutions came from the rich aristocracy, the Junker class and the well-to-do middle classes. But all these were ruined economically by the defeat in 1918 and the subsequent inflation of the currency. They were no longer able to finance charitable institutions—hospitals, homes of refuge, sisterhoods, etc.—to anything like an efficient degree. And this happened at a time when the demand for charitable assistance became almost universal. Somehow or other, too, the Prussians in this regard seemed to have lost their usual grit and grip. They remained supine while Catholic communities stepped in and offered help. Owing to their world-wide affiliations it was possible for Catholic sisterhoods to build hospitals, and it was possible for a Catholic priest, Father Sonnenschein, to organise a students' centre close to the Berlin University, where he and



his volunteers dispensed practical assistance to all comers. They were able to establish a tradition that they had never turned anyone away. Sonnenschein died in 1928, but his name has become a legend.

The moral reason for the weakness on the evangelical side was that they were only a local institution, and once the hand of Fate had dealt them a stunning blow they could not fall back on the consciousness that they were part of a world-wide organisation. It must be admitted too that the political parties in power encouraged Roman Catholic activity in the social sphere. The Catholic Centre and the Marxists had taken over the once proud position which evangelical Protestantism held in the Reichstag. This meant a set-back for the latter both in moral and political prestige.

The post-War generation may be said without exaggeration to have taken an absolutely negative attitude towards the Christian religion. That, of course, is a general statement. In making it one must take into account the fact that a reaction began to set in among the students attending the universities. And we must take account of the fact also that what was

true of Prussia was not true of the South to anything approaching a like degree. Still when all allowances are made the main fact remains that what was called *Gottlosigkeit* (godlessness) became the dominant characteristic of the young generation in post-war Prussia. They fell back on a type of vague pantheism of a curious mystical nature, showing itself principally in their love of the open, enthusiasm for natural beauty, folk-music and so on. Side by side with this there was a neo-classic cult of physical fitness which showed itself in the creation of huge stadia for athletic games. The youth movement was part of this ; but the youth movement was mainly a getting away from the inherited order of things. It was not conscious of any definite positive direction.

It is against this background that we must judge the present attempt to reconstruct Christianity in Prussia. The driving force which the Nazi movement tries to put into this endeavour is not for the sake of religion as such, but rather because Hitler and his followers believe that there must be some spiritual basis of cohesion before national solidarity can be



restored. That spiritual cohesion, even where it is no longer positively in touch with religious institutions, exists in older nations whose historical experiences have crystallised in everyday customs and habits of mind that form what may be called an organic national culture, an accepted way of looking at life—what the Germans would call a *Weltanschauung*. There is no such historical inheritance in Germany; for the Germans were not united in a political federation until 1871. And this union was for all practical purposes like an outer scaffolding held together by the clamps of Prussian militarism, which fell to the ground in 1918.

We now come to the Roman Catholic question. When the German Empire was founded in 1871 and Protestant Prussia took the lead, Bismarck tried to force the Catholics under the heel of Prussia. He wished that the State should have full control over the education of the clergy, the election of bishops and so on. The Catholics reacted strenuously against this move. And thus arose the *Kulturkampf*, the struggle that Bismarck lost. But, like all struggles, it also damaged the victors. The *Kulturkampf* forced German Catholics

to organise themselves in defence of their political rights. For this purpose Count Windthorst founded the Centre Party. The glamour of its victory against Bismarck induced Catholics to look upon the Centre Party as a sort of lay apostolate. The result was an over-emphasis on the politico-social aspect of their religion. And that was bound to remain so as long as the political rift in the Hohenzollern Empire coincided with the religious rift, the Catholic South defending its political interests against the Protestant North.

It is not without significance that national socialism started in Bavaria and that many of its leaders are Roman Catholics. Under one aspect it may be looked upon as a protest against the lowering of religion to the base uses of politics. Yet this thought could not very well have come into the foreground as long as the pressure of outer circumstances made it an absolute necessity for German Catholics to defend their religion in the political arena. But after the fall of the Prussian State Church and the Prussian Monarchy there was no longer the same justification for keeping the political forces of Roman Catholicism mobilised on a war footing.



It seems to be now acknowledged on the Catholic side as a mistake to have maintained the traditional tactics of the Centre Party. Those tactics were similar to the tactics of the Irish Nationalists in the British House of Commons. Like the Irish Nationalist Party, the Centre Party remained independent in principle; but in practice they were ready to join any other political party that would help them to their own ends, no matter how profoundly opposed they may have been to the general principles of that party.

These tactics turned out disastrous under the Republic. Outwardly the Centre seemed to have gained in power and prestige, but only as a political force—certainly not as a religious phalanx. Dr. Bruenning was lauded to the echo in the foreign press; but his own co-religionists felt serious misgivings when they saw him join hands with the socialist regime. Here it was not a matter of general principles. The socialists were actually engaged in fostering anti-religious movements throughout Prussia, and their press—largely in the hands of the Jews—stood for what was called the “secularisation” of all human ideals. The evangelicals

felt that they were fighting a losing battle against the advancing godlessness of Prussia and bemoaned the fact that the Catholic Centre Party was on the side of the enemies of religion (Hans Ehrenberg, *Deutschland im Schmelzofen* (“Germany in the Melting Pot”)).

When economic chaos began to set in, during 1929 and 1930, it revealed a spiritual chaos that was even more hopeless. Germans began to fall asunder, as it were, from one another. They had no common ideals to hold them together—national ideals, state ideals or religious ideals. That thing we call Faith, in its broadest sense, threatened to disappear. On meeting the average Berliner and asking, “*Wie geht's?*” he usually answered: “*Besser als morgen*” (“Better than to-morrow”). This spectacle of general scepticism induced some leading members of the Catholic laity to join in an alliance with the Protestants for the purpose of defending Christianity against Marxist propaganda. The inspirational source of this movement was the papal appeal in 1931 to the Christians of Europe to unite against the godless proselytising of the Russian Soviets.

All this throws light on Hitler's subsequent



attitude towards the Catholic Centre and Dr. Bruening. After a few months in power he succeeded in forcing the Centre Party to go into voluntary liquidation. And almost immediately afterwards the German Government, in the person of the Vice-Chancellor, signed a Concordat with the Vatican.

The terms of the Concordat were published in Rome on July 22nd 1933. In virtue of these terms the Catholic Church is guaranteed the same general rights and privileges throughout the whole Reich as it hitherto enjoyed in Bavaria and Baden. There is to be an Apostolic Nunzio in Berlin—that is to say, a papal ambassador—who will take precedence of honour before the other diplomatic representatives, as he does in France. The Reich is to maintain an Embassy to the Holy See. Religious instruction of Catholic children and youths is guaranteed in all the schools of the Reich, to be carried out according to the wishes of the local Catholic authorities. The Reich is not given the power of veto over the appointment of Catholic bishops; but the Vatican undertakes not to appoint bishops whose political loyalty is in question. And to give

this undertaking practical assurance the Vatican will advise the German Government of the names of the candidates for episcopal appointment, and the German Government will have the opportunity of making its protest, if any, within twenty days before the actual appointment takes place. All Catholic social and religious associations are guaranteed freedom of action. And both sides have agreed that priests and bishops will abstain from politics. Article 32 runs thus :

“ In view of the present special conditions existing in Germany and in consideration of the guarantee given by the dispositions of the present Concordat, for legislation which safeguards the rights and liberty of the Catholic Church in the Reich and in its states, the Holy See will adopt measures for the exclusion of ecclesiastical and religious persons from belonging to political parties and from activities in this field.”

Thus the breach opened by the *Kulturkampf* has ended, and one great historical obstacle has been removed which hitherto prevented the Catholic states from co-operating wholeheartedly with Prussia for the general welfare of the German Reich.



## CHAPTER NINE

### HITLER AND THE JEWS

THIS is a contentious topic. An adequate exposition of it from a strictly impartial standpoint would probably arouse hostile criticism on both sides. Here, however, there is not space for more than a bare outline. To attempt an exhaustive treatment would involve the necessity of discussing historical and religious factors, sociological and economic statistics, the interplay of cultural environment and racial psychology, the forces of Jewish finance in Germany and their ramifications in the political field and a hundred other considerations.

In the circumstances I think the most practical course will be to indicate some outstanding facts that have contributed in a positive way to determine a situation out of which the present conflict has arisen between the Jewish race and the Hitler regime in Germany. With these facts before his mind

## HITLER AND THE JEWS

the reader will have certain reliable viewpoints from which he may at least intelligently survey the battle-ground without feeling a temptation to take sides.

The first fact to be recognised is that anti-semitism is not a phenomenon of to-day or yesterday in Germany. It is co-eval with the foundation of the Prussian State. Prussia was founded as a military principality by the Teutonic Knights, who wrested from heathen Slavs the whole region between the Elbe and the Memel and made it Christian. This was at the opening of the fourteenth century. The Teutonic Knights were a military order which played a conspicuous part in the Crusades. We must remember that the *esprit de corps* which animated the Crusaders must have been anti-semitic; for they were sworn to rescue the Holy Land from the grip of the infidel and bring it under the protection of Christianity. As an indication of the anti-semitic spirit of the Crusades it will be sufficient to point out that during the First Crusade (1095) over ten thousand Jews were slaughtered by the Crusaders in the German cities of the Rhineland. It was under the ægis of the crusading



spirit also that popular fury against the Jews rose to such a height in England that they were expelled lock, stock and barrel by Edward I. They were not allowed back until 1655, when Cromwell tacitly assented to their return.

A medieval tradition would not have much practical force in contemporary England, for the British people are not, to use an Americanism, historically-minded. But the opposite is the case in Germany, especially in Prussia. There the tradition of the Teutonic Knights is living and forceful still. Indeed, it lies at the core of Prussian militarism. The Garrison Church at Potsdam, where the Hitler regime was solemnly inaugurated in March 1933, is permeated with the living breath of that medieval militarism. The Order of the Teutonic Knights still exists in Prussia, and President Hindenburg is a staunch member of it. Adolf Hitler has not yet been elected to that honour.

In the fourteenth century an epidemic called the "Black Death" spread throughout Europe. It carried away 25,000,000 lives. In Germany the Jews were blamed for the outbreak of the disease, it being said that

they had poisoned the drinking water in the cities. Though the Jews themselves suffered heavily from the plague, still for some reason or other they resisted its ravages better than the Christians, and the story of their culpability was popularly believed. The Jews fled before the public wrath thus aroused in Germany and took refuge in Poland under Casimir the Great (1333-70). They brought with them their German dialect, which is the basis of modern Yiddish. When Prussia annexed a large part of Poland in 1795 descendants of those exiled Jews were once again included in Germany, and finally, during the Great War and the immediate post-War years, there was an inrush of Polish Jews into Prussia, especially from the former German Province of Posen. Many of these latter immigrants were not of very desirable types, a fact which partly accounts for the present anti-Jewish wrath in Prussia.

Contemporary anti-semitism in Europe dates from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). The financial *débâcle* which followed, in 1873, was attributed to the Jews in both Germany and France as well as in Austria. But here we have



to consider only Germany. In 1873 a Hamburg journalist named Wilhelm Marr published a pamphlet called *The Victory of Judaism over Germanism*. Hegel was the fashion among the German youth of that time, and his theory of nationality was the philosophical expression of their patriotism, which was then at its highest pitch of Jingoism as a result of the great victory against the French and the founding of the German Empire in 1871.

Marr revived old prejudices and fanned them into new life under this patriotic flame. His views spread like wildfire. The rank and file of the people, who had been affected by the financial *débâcle*, took up the hue and cry. Prussian landowners and farmers, who had borrowed from the Jews at high interest in prosperous times and could not now foot the interest bill, joined in the fray. And the agitation was effectively helped by the sensitiveness of the Jews themselves, who gave Marr's pamphlet a newspaper publicity which it otherwise would not have gained.

The Marr campaign died down with the return of better times; but it was reopened by Bismarck in 1879. The great anti-semitic

protagonist was now an evangelical pastor, named Stoecker, who was also court preacher. During the years 1880-1 the conflict became quite as bitter as it is to-day. The conservatives supported Stoecker. Lutheran pastors and Roman Catholic clergy joined him, because Jewish liberals had previously supported Bismarck in the anti-Catholic policy of the *Kulturkampf*. But indeed there was another consideration that was more important than all the others, as it also is to-day. This was the Jewish championship of Marxist socialism, which was then being widely preached throughout Europe. Marx himself, of course, was a Jew. And the man who first preached socialism in Germany, in 1862, was also a Jew named Ferdinand Lasalle.

We now come to the immediate link with Hitler. Christian Socialism was started, both in Germany and Austria, to combat Marxism. It was avowedly anti-semitic. In the early nineties it spread throughout Austria under the leadership of Prince Liechtenstein, who received the blessing of Pope Leo XIII on his work because the Pope had come to the conclusion that the best antidote to Marxist



Socialism, which was positively anti-Christian, would be a fusion of the Christian Socialists and anti-semites. Dr. Karl Lueger took over from Prince Liechtenstein the leadership of the Christian Socialists and anti-semites in Austria. Lueger was elected Mayor of Vienna in October 1895. But the Emperor refused to sanction the election, on account of Lueger's extreme views. Vienna remained without a mayor for three months. At the second election, in February 1896, Lueger was returned with an increased majority. The Emperor capitulated and Lueger ruled Vienna for twelve years. Hitler made his acquaintance there and absorbed his doctrines. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler writes a glowing panegyric on Karl Lueger and Stoecker.

Hitler's immediate precursor, who prepared the way for the present spread of anti-semitism in Germany, was an Englishman and the son of a British admiral. His name was Houston Chamberlain. He married the daughter of Richard Wagner and lived most of his time in Germany, though he did not become a German subject until after the War had broken out. In 1899 Chamberlain

published his great book *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. An English edition, with an introduction by Lord Redesdale, was published by John Lane in 1910. *The Times Literary Supplement* (December 15th 1910) spoke of it as "one of the rare books that really matter." In Germany the book achieved enormous popularity, and continues to be one of the best sellers there. Thousands of copies were distributed free by Kaiser William II.

This book has had a dominant influence on German thought for the past forty years. Several chapters are devoted to an attempt to prove that the Jew must ever remain an alien in western Europe. Chamberlain holds that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was the fault of the Jew himself, "a born rebel to all State law," he says. He quotes Herder, who stated that "the Jewish people is and remains in Europe an Asiatic people alien to our own part of the world." And he cites Goethe, who held that Indo-Europeans had a different human origin from that of the Jews. "Almost all pre-eminent men," says Chamberlain, "from Tiberius to Bismarck, have looked upon the presence of



the Jew in our midst as a social and political danger."

In order to show that this idea was considered by no means unreasonable at that time, even in England, I may quote again from the comment made by *The Times Literary Supplement*: "As against the Jew," it says, in explanation of Chamberlain's root idea, "the Teuton succumbs in many fields of action by virtue of one of his own noblest and most profound characteristics. A mighty and invincible worker and fighter in all things that appeal to his soul, to his ideals, he is careless of those that do not—he can not bring himself to take them seriously. Hence the business of money-making, the organisation of popular amusements, the popular press, commercial literature, art and drama tend more and more to fall into the hands of the now emancipated Jew, whose enormous will-power and absence of disturbing ideals (outside of the definite and narrow sphere of his religion) enable him to triumph easily in all these fields."

Chamberlain spread the dogma of what may be called scientific nationalism throughout Germany. The positive side of the Aryan

theory became immensely popular in academic circles and the negative side of it (the anti-Jewish) was popular with the rank and file. Hitler organised this mentality as a driving force in the national socialist movement. We have to remember the historical preparation of the German mind in order to understand the enthusiastic reponse which has greeted Hitler's anti-Jewish appeal.

We come now to the material side of the question. When we speak of the national socialist *revolution* what do we mean? If it be a revolution, then on whose side is the revolt and against whom is it directed? Of course, as in the case of all revolutions, it is the revolt of the "have-nots" against the "haves." In this case the Jews are the "haves" and the Aryan Germans are the "have nots." Let us take a few reliable and unquestioned statistics by way of illustration.

According to the census of 1925 there were 564,379 Jews in Germany. That means less than 1 per cent of the whole German population. A Jewish statistician, A. Menes, writing in a Yiddish publication, *Wirtschaft und Leben*, in February 1930, reckons that the annual



income of the Jewish population in Berlin was between £36,000,000 or £37,000,000 sterling at gold par in 1928, which may be taken as a normal year. As the Jewish population of Berlin is 175,000, in round numbers, this would mean that Berlin Jews have an average annual income per head, including the babies, of just a little over 200 guineas in gold. Menes calculates the annual income of the whole Jewish population in Germany at between 1,450 and 1,500 millions of marks in gold, roughly £75,000,000 sterling at gold par. Thus the average annual income per head of the whole Jewish population in Germany would be about £120 sterling at gold par. Against this the average income of the German population per head is only £32 annually. So that the average Jew in Germany, counting in the poorest, has four times more money than the average German, and the Berlin Jew is seven times wealthier than the average German. But these figures are from a Jewish source and may be a little below the mark; for Professor Werner Sombart calculated that before the war the average Jew in Germany was seven times wealthier than the average German, taken through and through.

Sombart, it may be pointed out, is a sociologist whose name is world-wide. Nearly all his life he has been a socialist and pro-Jewish.

What is the position of the Jews in German industry and trade? I can take only a few leading business lines as an indication. Of the factories engaged in the textile industry 18 per cent were in Jewish hands in 1930. That is the national percentage. If we confine the count to Berlin alone we find that 43 per cent of the textile factories there were Jewish, though the Jews form only 4 per cent of the city's population. Of the wholesale textile trade 50 per cent was owned by Jews, counting all the textile wholesale establishments in Germany. In the big cities, however, the percentage was much higher. In Berlin it was over 61 per cent; in Breslau it was 74 per cent; in Frankfurt-on-Main it was 70 per cent. In the manufacture of drapery for women and girls 42 per cent of the factories in the whole of Germany belonged to the Jews, and in the wholesale drapery trade 61 per cent. Fifty-nine per cent of the factories for the making of men's and boys' clothing were Jewish, and 49 per cent of the wholesale trade in these



products. In Berlin, however, 60 per cent of the wholesale trade and industry was Jewish. I have given these figures merely as an indication of the position which the Jews have held, and still hold, in German industry and commerce. Of course there are certain branches where their influence is not prevalent, the iron and steel and coal industries, for instance. But then we must remember that these heavy industries are very largely owned by the Reich, the federal states and the municipalities. I think it fair to say that the figures given above are a reliable indication of the position held by the Jews in those branches of industry and commerce which are run by private capital.

What about the financial position? The chief direction of the great public banks has hitherto been almost a Jewish monopoly. Of private banks, which play a signal part in commercial and industrial and especially agricultural finance, there were 994 in 1930, and of these 485 were Jewish, that is to say, 50 per cent.

All the above figures are taken from a Jewish source, *Die wirtschaftliche Krise des deutschen Juden*, by Dr. Alfred Marcus (Berlin 1931).

They show, I think, that less than 1 per cent of the German population, representing a group of people alien in race and tradition, have a very strong and almost decisive voice in the financial and commercial affairs of the country. Somehow or other this body does not seem to have suffered any serious economic or financial set-back as a result of the War, whereas the German aristocracy and economic classes have been ruined economically, and 7,000,000 of the working classes reduced to unemployment and beggary. In the light of the above figures we can at least understand the existence of an anti-semitic bias on the part of the dispossessed, and we can understand how it was possible to organise this bias into a revolutionary drive. It is not to the point here to ask how the Jews came to have such an important position, or to attempt a moral estimate as to whether their achievement in such a period of general distress is to their credit or discredit. That is not our business. I am merely suggesting an intelligible explanation of a fact that must be faced objectively.

An outstanding phase of the Hitler movement, as it was also of Italian Fascism, is its



academic support. The students of the high schools and the universities form what may be called the spearhead of the Nazi revolution. We shall understand why if, in conjunction with the academic tradition of scientific nationalism of which I have already spoken, we take the following into account :

There are more than 100,000 young Germans who have taken university diplomas and doctorates in the various liberal professions and have no jobs. Among these some 6,000 or 8,000 belong to the medical profession. Now in Berlin alone there are 6,000 medical doctors in practice and of these 2,138 are Jewish; or rather that was the case just before the Nazi revolution. Eighty per cent of the medical practitioners in Nürnberg are Jews, 27 per cent in Cologne, 23 per cent in Karlsruhe. These figures give an indication of the state of affairs in one branch of the liberal professions. Much the same is true of the legal branch. In what may be called the free professions, such as literature and journalism, the Jews hold a very important position. The biggest press combine in Germany is the Ullstein concern, and it is entirely Jewish.

The Rudolf Mosse concern was also Jewish, but has gone into liquidation and is now under Nazi control. Probably about 50 per cent of Berlin journalists have until recently been Jews.

It is an astonishing fact that the majority of authors who became prominent in Germany since the war are Jewish—Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig, Emil Ludwig, Georg Kaiser, Karl Sternheim, Vicky Baum, to mention only a few. It is widely said that hitherto it has been impossible for a Christian author to become a success in Germany because the Jewish press propagandised its own kith and kin. There may be some truth in that contention, though certainly it is not the whole truth. There are several other factors which go to explain the anomaly, but we cannot deal with them here. Anyhow, the point is that the contention is widely believed and is one interpretation of an actual fact. The interpretation may be incorrect, because subjective, but starving young men out of the university will be attracted by any interpretation that promises them fame and bread.

I shall conclude this chapter with two general



observations. The first is that what may be called the ruling classes in Germany, that is to say, the aristocracy and upper-middle classes, heretofore held aloof from the nation's business. This was specially true of the Prussians. They staffed the army and the statal bureaucracy; but they used to look on business people as an inferior race of human beings—*Geschäftsleute*, they were called, with a sneer. This gave the Jew his opportunity to become a leader in the German world of business and finance. Now that the aristocracy and upper classes have lost their economic independence and cannot look to the army for the employment of their sons, they must get to work and take a hand in the material affairs of their country. Finding these so much under the control of the traditionally hated Jew they are anxious to oust him and take over control themselves.

The second general observation is that historical developments in Germany have proved that the Jews backed the wrong horse when they backed Marxist socialism and the social-democratic German Republic founded at Weimar in 1919. International socialism of

the Marxist type is dead in Germany, at least for the time being, and the failure of the German Republic is universally recognised. It came to an end in March 1933, when the members of the Reichstag, elected under the constitution of the republic, gathered in session at the Kroll Opera House and voted by an overwhelming majority to appoint Adolf Hitler Dictator of Germany for four years, with power to alter the Constitution. It was a Jew, Hugo Preuss, who actually drew up and formulated that Constitution in 1919.



## CHAPTER TEN

### TOWARDS THE THIRD EMPIRE

ALMOST up to the moment that he became Chancellor the majority of foreign journalists in Germany pooh-poohed Hitler and his movement. The first landslide of the electorate in favour of the Nazis in 1930 was explained as a piece of temporary insanity which would pass away before the next general election. But one general election followed close on the heels of another—two presidential elections in 1932 and two parliamentary elections in the same year—and each time the popular support of the Nazis increased. From 809,541 votes at the parliamentary election in 1928 the Nazis jumped to 6,406,397 in 1930, to 13,700,000 in July 1932 and to 14,700,000 (which included the Nationalists' vote, now in alliance with the Nazis) in November of the same year, and to more than 20,000,000 in 1933, the total vote cast then being 40,000,000

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in round numbers. This last election, in March 1933, gave the Nazis, in alliance with the Nationalists, a clear majority in the Reichstag. Obviously the foreign observers who pooh-poohed Hitler in 1930 had not gauged the trend of the public mind in Germany.

When Hitler became Chancellor and began to put some leading points of his programme into effect a hostile campaign was organised against him in the foreign press. His treatment of communists, socialists, trades unions and Jews became the object of universal disapprobation abroad. The conservative portion of the British and American press closed its eyes and heart to the woes of communists and socialists and trades unions and concentrated on the Jews. Mass meetings were held in various countries and resolutions were passed calling on the conscience of Christendom to awake and save the German people from this new tyranny.

The anti-Hitler campaign might have been waged with the use of reason rather than mob sentiment if the foreign observers, whose duty it is to keep the readers of their home newspapers informed on German affairs, had taken



the trouble to make an impartial study of the situation that developed in Germany during the years 1929 to 1932. Abuse of Hitler and his immediate associates has helped only to raise a smoke-screen between the public mind abroad and the stark realities of the German situation. It may be true that a crude and even criminal temper has actuated some of Hitler's followers and supporters, and it is true that selfish motives account for much of the enthusiasm in the ranks of the Brown Shirts; but it is not here that we are to look for the driving force back of the movement. Nor are we to seek that driving force in the political catch-cries and slogans of the Nazis, their swastikas and Jew-baiting. We must try rather to realise the dramatic intensity of the national crisis which urged them to action and has sustained their revolutionary effort.

If I were asked by some chance acquaintance to say as man to man what I considered to be the secret of Hitler's success I should first emphasise a certain number of contributory factors in the general situation.

I should point out, for instance, that foreign observers in Germany were put off the track

of the political developments of the past four years because they had their eyes fixed on the German Parliament—the Reichstag. Hitler and his advisers ignored Parliament during the revolutionary stages of their movement. They awakened the country politically and organised it on an extra-parliamentary basis. In doing this they were acting in harmony with the public spirit; for the Germans as a nation had never looked to the Reichstag in the way that the British people look to Westminster and the Americans to Washington.

One reason for this indifference was that the Government had never been responsible to the Parliament in the old regime. It was responsible only to the Kaiser. And during the old regime the great middle class left the imperial entourage and the higher officials of the army and navy and civil service to do the necessary political thinking for the country. The German *bourgeoisie*, like the *haute bourgeoisie* in France, prided itself as the curator of the national culture and the source of its creative spirit. They were really more interested in Goethe and Beethoven and Wagner and Hegel than in Bismarck, though Bismarck was more



in the public gaze. When education began to be democratised the upward striving of the lower classes was not towards political position, or even wealth, but rather towards a cultural uplift which was accompanied at the same time by steady progress in social betterment. The ruling powers encouraged all this because it was not political and left them in undisturbed control. One way of turning the socialist menace into harmless channels was to direct its attention towards practical social betterment in the material sense and educational advance. Hence the development of popular theatres, popular orchestras, popular grand opera, lecture courses and so on. Hence, also, the rapid rise of the poorer Jewish classes to positions in the various liberal professions. Schoolmasters and professors scarcely knew the difference between one political party and another, except that they all knew what the Catholic Centre stood for, because it was bellicose. There were learned sociologists and very learned professors of political science in the high schools and universities; but their theories were far removed from the practical realities of everyday politics.

In pre-War Germany, therefore, there was nothing like the same political activity among the masses of the people as there was in England. People did not look to political measures as a means of social and economic progress. The result of this was that the nation was not in living organic touch with the Parliament and was only theoretically interested, if at all, in political problems.

One source of Hitler's success is to be attributed to the fact that he assayed this situation accurately. He was the first to awaken the political interest of the populace at large, and to awaken it not in favour of a mere party programme but in favour of a programme which would revolutionise the whole social-economic and political system. It was really because of this fundamental appeal that the ear of the public was ready to hear.

Germany had become a prey to the abstract intellect, and learning had shot its bolt. Under the steadily deepening gloom of the impending chaos people no longer had tranquil nerves for the reading of books and pamphlets and learned articles on public affairs in the newspapers and reviews. Indeed, the more the



learned solutions continued to pile on one another the more deeply the country sank into distress. Bruening's emergency decrees needed a sanhedrin of lawyers for their interpretation. The time was ripe for a man of the people to come before the people face to face and talk straight out.

Hitler did that. People have called him a born orator. He isn't. He is a very shrewd peasant, with the peasant instinct for grasping realities, and he knows that the human reason is a quiescent faculty in the mass. He cultivated a technique of addressing mammoth meetings which was suited to his hearers. It was something along the lines of American electioneering, except very much better organised. He talked at these meetings for several hours, and sent his audience away with the belief that a Saviour had come. But he did not leave the impression to take care of itself. A national-socialist "cell" was established in each neighbourhood and the young men were gathered in to act as local apostles. They had their gospel delivered to them in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, and it was a gospel that everybody could understand. The old political

clichés were not repeated. Here there was a fresh and naïve outlook which could be appreciated by people who were new to political thought and naïve themselves. This popular preaching and organising went on untiringly for over five years. Then, in 1930, the fruits of it became manifest at the general parliamentary election.

In the summer of 1931 the old order broke down completely. When I say "the old order" I do not mean merely the German order as such, but rather that the old European capitalist regime broke down in Germany. But it is not the full truth to say that the old order broke down in 1931. It had really dissolved internally long ago; but the final collapse was not manifest until 1931.

In the July of that year several of the leading German banks suddenly closed their doors and a moratorium had to be granted for all the others. Social and commercial chaos reigned. The Bruening Government, which was in power at the time, failed to proclaim a moratorium for private persons and business concerns. The public, which still remembered with horror the events of the inflation period,



was now seized with panic lest inflation might be resorted to once again. So every creditor, even the smallest, tried to get his money at once.

In order to understand the reason for this it is well to recall the fact that in a period of inflation the creditor always loses. The German mark, for example, was normally worth an English shilling, or twenty-five cents in American money, before the War. Throughout the War it maintained its value steadily. But after the War it collapsed through inflation. Supposing one German owed another 10,000 marks (£500) in 1918 and paid him in 1923, the 10,000 mark note would not buy an apple. Yet it was legal tender for 10,000 marks of pre-War money. Sometimes 10,000 marks might buy an apple in the morning and in the afternoon it could not purchase one gooseberry; for the government machines had in the meantime turned out billions of new paper-money.

In 1931 the memory of 1922-3 surged up in the popular mind and obsessed it. Everybody rushed to call in every penny of credit in the quickest possible time. The banks were

protected by a moratorium and paid out only a daily dole to depositors, while the banks whose doors were closed paid out nothing. Therefore even a millionaire who had his money at the bank could not pay his tailor's bill. Nor would the tailor accept a cheque for it, because when the bank would open he could not tell what the value of the number of marks written on the face of that cheque would turn out to be in case inflation had been resorted to in the meantime. And that was what he feared.

Pandemonium set in. Everybody summoned everybody else for the payment of accounts. During the first three months of the crisis—July, August and September 1933—the cost of summons-serving in the Central District of Berlin alone was reckoned to have been more than the running expenses of the whole legal equipment of that district, counting the judges' salaries. Court procedure was allowed to go on automatically without any regard whatsoever to the unusual character of the situation. The summons was brought by the postman. The debtor got three days to answer. Only one answer was valid in court—*Geld*, money.



If the debtor acknowledged the bill and proved that he had the money in the bank and would pay when the bank opened that mattered nothing. If he could not produce cold cash then and there the magistrate or judge gave judgment against him forthwith. Then the bailiff came hot-foot and sequestered the debtor's belongings. Five hundred extra bailiffs, in addition to the regular two thousand, were employed in Berlin alone for this laudable purpose. The Nazis afterwards pointed out that this was the only profession in Germany where there was no unemployment and that every bailiff in the country would be sure to vote for Bruening.

The banks called in their overdrafts and foreclosed the mortgages they held, with the result that all over the country property was sold by forced auction at a price which did not average 50 per cent of the official valuation through and through. As to the movable belongings sequestered and sold under the hammer, only 1 per cent of the debts for which they had been taken was realised at the auctions.

This wholesale destruction of values in property went on apace, and not the slightest

effort was made by the Bruening Government to call a halt. Pettifogging emergency decrees were issued to meet the necessities of a tragic situation. The middle class, which had lost the bulk of its wealth during the post-War inflation period, was now dispossessed of whatever it had saved from the first calamity or had earned since then. People who had no possessions were envied by those who had. Property began to be looked upon as a burden. The unemployed increased to 7,000,000. At a meeting of the Patzenhofer Brewery the President, Jakob Goldschmidt—who was also President of the bankrupt Danat Bank and a member of the Goldschmidt-Rothschild family—declared that between 1929 and 1931 it was not a period of time that had elapsed but the breakdown of a world order.

The time had come for constructive policy to bring order out of chaos. What was required was a clean break-away from the old traditions. And a clean break-away was the first demand put forward by the national socialists. Hitler's movement had developed to a stage when it was now possible for it to take over power and hold the country together. That is



a point which must always be borne in mind when judging this movement and its leader. The explanation of its rapid success and national support lies in the fact that it stepped in with a constructive programme at a crisis in which the old order had completely collapsed.

Speaking at Reichenhall on July 2nd 1933 the Chancellor declared that his revolution was at an end. By this he meant that the purely insurrectionary stage of the movement had fully attained its objective. The old regime had been overthrown and the new political situation established. But this is only the first objective of the national socialist advance, since it represents only the conquest of political power. How that political power will be used to reconstruct the German nation and place it on a permanent economic, social and political foundation will be a question for future historians.

On August 5th the Chancellor assembled the national and regional leaders of the Nazi Party at his villa near Berchtesgaden, in Bavaria. In the course of a long address he stated that since

he had taken over the government of the country 2,000,000 unemployed had been taken off the streets. Even though we may take these figures as not exactly representing the actual state of affairs, it is admitted on all hands that during the first nine months of the Nazi regime there has been a very large reduction in the number of the unemployed, and that most of this reduction will be permanent. This was the result of what Hitler called the first wave of his attack against unemployment. A second and third wave, he said, were to follow.

Taking a general survey of the transformation effected in the public life of Germany during the first nine months of Hitler's Chancellorship an unbiased observer will readily admit that what the Nazi leader has accomplished must on the whole be taken as an unqualified triumph for himself and his ideas. Even his former bitterest opponents admit this.

I shall conclude with two comments from these. The first will be from the *Germania*, which up to July 1st was the leading press organ of the Catholic Centre Party. The second will be from the *Vossische Zeitung*, the principal



organ of the biggest press combine in Germany, the Ullstein firm, which is Jewish and has steadfastly championed the social democratic cause. The *Germania* of July 1st wrote as follows :

“ In sponsoring the Weimar Constitution the Catholic politicians renounced the creative political work which up to then they had carried on in a Christian and German spirit and which was in defence of the Church and the Catholic section of the population. The forces of German Catholicism now became frittered away in questions of the hour. And though among the young generation there was much talk about the change in the times they did not understand the essential meaning of this. Otherwise they would not have been so helpless and slow-witted in the face of such a movement as that of National Socialism. The un-German character of the Weimar Republic seemed to offer protection for the pursuit of denominational aims such as were the objective of the Centre Party, but this was an illusion. The supreme head of the new State has made open profession of Christianity. Between him

and the German people there is no place for the intervention of a denominational political organisation, such as the Centre and its auxiliary bodies represent. Between the leader and the people there must now be only the living bond of German loyalty.”

On July 2nd the *Vossische Zeitung* wrote :

“ There is a well-known axiom which states that to be young one must know how to forget. We must forget the degrading internal strife of recent years and turn our minds to the great task which awaits us as a result of an unparalleled revolution. Come what may, it is a good thing to have been born a German ; but we should have no task to perform if we were to love Germany only when everything is done according to the will of each individual. It is now clear that Germany can be ruled in that manner no longer. And even those who in their hearts still belong to the opposition must ask themselves the question : In the light of all that has happened, who else if not Adolf Hitler is capable of leading Germany ? ”



## CHAPTER XI

### HITLER ADDRESSES THE WORLD

ON MAY 17TH 1933 the German Chancellor made a solemn official pronouncement before a special session of the Reichstag on Germany's attitude towards the chief problems that have formed the crux of the international situation since the War. The speech was expressly meant for the ears of the world at large.

We now know that this declaration of policy was not meant as an opportunist move to calm the foreign anxieties that had arisen during the first months of the Nazi dictatorship. On October 14th 1933 when he stated the reasons for Germany's dramatic withdrawal from the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference, Hitler simply repeated what he had said in the Reichstag five months before. Obviously the Reichstag address of May 17th must be looked upon as an *ex cathedra* encyclical to the nations, stating the unchangeable

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principles on which German foreign policy will be conducted under the Nazi regime.

The speech is quite Hitleresque. It is naïve and simple and straightforward and, as it is usual with Hitler, it is not devoid of redundancies. Perhaps the crowning interest of it is that here we have the untutored peasant mind taking firm and resolute hold of basic realities which the sophisticated statesmen who preceded him had fumbled and consequently lost the game.

I have translated directly from the text as published in the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* for May 18th. But the last few paragraphs, which did not appear in that paper, have been taken from Reuter's report.

### SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE REICHSTAG

MAY 17TH 1933

IN the name of the Government of the Reich I have requested the Speaker, Herr Goering, to summon the Reichstag so that this assembly might hear from me a statement of our position in regard to the questions that are agitating the minds of our people at the present time, and



also the rest of the world. You are familiar with these problems. They are of such great importance because it is on their successful solution that the political reconciliation of the world and its economic salvation depend.

It is the desire of the German Government that in dealing with these problems every element of passion should be excluded. I make that statement because the conviction is firmly fixed in all our minds that the causes of the present crisis have their primary origin in those passions which darkened the insight and intelligence of the nations after the War. We know that all the difficulties which are causing so much unrest to-day have arisen from the defects of the Peace Treaty, inasmuch as that Treaty failed to bring forward a solution of those problems which were bound to predetermine the future. National and economic necessities, and questions affecting the juridical relations between the various peoples, were not settled by the Treaty in a way that might endure the light of rational criticism. It was therefore natural that the thought of revision should go hand-in-hand with the Treaty and the results experienced from its application.

And so the necessity for a revision was foreseen by its authors and was given a legal basis in the Treaty itself.

I shall deal briefly with the problems that ought to have been settled by this Treaty. My reason for doing so here is that the failure of the Treaty in this respect has led inexorably to these subsequent misfortunes under which the economic and political relations between the various peoples are now suffering.

These political and national problems are as follows :

As the European States evolved through the centuries and gradually fixed permanent frontiers they were exclusively actuated by the idea of the State. But during the nineteenth century the principle of nationality became predominant. States which had been founded under other conditions failed to take practical account of the new idea. This failure was the seed of future discord.

When the Great War had come to an end such a condition of affairs ought to have been clearly recognised, and no nobler task could have been undertaken by the Conference than to attempt to bring about, under the light of



this recognition, a territorial and political readjustment of the European States wherein the principle of nationality would have been treated with the fullest possible measure of justice. The more this readjustment succeeded in identifying the frontiers of nationality with the political frontiers of the various States the more surely would have been eliminated a whole series of grievances affording grounds for future quarrels. Yes, this territorial readjustment of Europe in accord with the actual national boundaries would have been a genuine historical solution, and would have made such wise provision for the future that both conquerors and conquered alike might well feel that the sacrifices of the Great War had not been in vain, inasmuch as they would have given to the world the foundations of a real and abiding peace. But what really happened was otherwise. Through ignorance and passion and hatred the measures adopted were so unjust and so contrary to common sense that they actually gave rise to new grounds for discord.

The following are the economic problems whose solution ought to have been taken in hand by the Peace Conference :

The determining features of the present economical situation in Europe are the overpopulation of western Europe and the poverty of its soil in certain raw materials that are indispensable to the standard of life which this part of the world has grown accustomed to by reason of its long-standing civilisation. If there had been a genuine desire to bring about a definite and lasting pacification through the agency of the Peace Treaty then, instead of giving way to barren and pernicious ideas of penalties and punishments and reparations, the fact would have been acknowledged that the lack of life's necessities has always been the cause of discord among nations. Instead of preaching extermination, attention should have been concentrated on the problem of reorganising political and economic relations on a basis that would be ample enough to give room for the greatest possible exercise of distributive justice in satisfying the vital needs of the individual nations. It is not a wise policy to deprive a people of the economic necessities of life, entirely ignoring the fact that the people who are dependent on these necessities have nothing else to live upon in that particular part



of the world and are at the same time destined to continue their existence there.

It is nonsensical to think that the economic destruction of a nation of sixty millions of people could turn out to be a profitable service to other nations. The pursuers of such a policy did not have long to wait for the truth to be brought home to themselves that, in the operation of the natural law of cause and effect, the policy of extermination must necessarily engulf the authors in the very catastrophe they had prepared for others. The millions of unemployed which we have to-day are the result of this policy. If the payment of reparations were confined to deliveries in kind the internal production of the creditor nations must necessarily suffer thereby; for the deliveries in kind that come into question here refer to a class of goods which cannot possibly be transferred without subsequently bringing about a decline in the industrial output of the recipient nation. The Versailles Treaty is to blame for having inaugurated an epoch in which financial arithmetic seems to have expelled the operations of reason from the field of economics. Germany has faithfully fulfilled the obligations laid upon

her in spite of their unreasonable character and the suicidal consequences that were foreseen as a result of their fulfilment. The present international economic crisis is an incontestable proof of the truth of this statement.

The hope of reorganising international relations on sound juridical grounds was also destroyed by the Conference; for in order to furnish a motive for the provisions of the Versailles Edict as a whole Germany had to be branded as the guilty party. That was a very simple procedure, but it must necessarily lead to an impossible state of affairs. Its logical consequences must be that in future the blame for every conflict will be laid on the shoulders of the conquered, because it will always be possible for the victor to impose this doctrine. The procedure thus adopted at the conclusion of the last War was of disastrous import because it furnished the grounds for transforming the interests of those who then held in their hands the superiority of might into a permanent legal system of right. And thus the concept of conqueror on the one hand and conquered on the other was made the basis of a new international juridical and social order. The



degradation of a great people to the level of a second-class nation was promulgated to the world with the same breath that brought the League of Nations into being. This treatment of Germany could not possibly lead to world reconciliation. To make the degradation practical it was necessary to disarm the vanquished. This line of conduct was a new departure in the history of Europe. It was not calculated to lessen the general danger and remove the grounds of discord. Of itself it led rather to persistently repeated threats and requisitions and sanctions which brought about a permanent condition of insecurity and unrest and thus threatened to undermine the whole economic structure of the world.

As long as the League of Nations fails to pay attention to this consideration, and does not take account of the dangers that are inherent in such policy as I have mentioned, irrational instincts will prevail over the sway of human reason. Up to the present at least the League of Nations has failed to come to the assistance of the weak and unarmed.

Treaties which are concluded for the purpose of bringing about a stable condition of

international peace have no inner value except when they are genuinely and honestly inspired by the principle of equal rights for all. It is in the absence of this principle we are to seek the main causes of the ferment that has been troubling the world for years. Yet it is in the interests of all to settle our present-day problems in a reasonable and definite manner. No new European war could improve the unpleasant conditions under which we are living to-day. The opposite would happen; for the resort to violence of any kind in Europe now would result only in making the economic and political situation still worse.

Even if a fresh resort to the arbitrament of power had a decisive result, the ultimate consequences would be to render European equilibrium still more unstable and thus in one way or another sow the seeds of new complications and conflicts. Then we should have renewed wars, more suffering, more unrest and more economic distress. If such a fit of endlessly recurrent madness were to break out it would lead to the collapse of our present social and political order. Europe would sink into a chaos of anarchy and a crisis would ensue whose extent and duration



cannot possibly be foretold. It is the profound wish of the National Government of the German Reich to co-operate honourably and actively to prevent the development of such a lamentable contingency.

That is the inner significance of the revolution which has taken place in Germany. Our revolution has three characteristic aims, none of which is in any way opposed to the interests of the rest of the world. These aims are :

First : To forestall the threatened Communist revolt and to build up a National State which will unify the interests of the various classes and maintain the concept of property as the basis of our civilisation.

Second : To solve the most difficult of our social problems by restoring to productive labour the millions of our suffering unemployed.

Third : To establish a stable and authoritative control of the State, based on the confidence and goodwill of the nation, so that this great people may once again take its responsible place among the nations of the earth.

At this moment I am speaking deliberately as a German National Socialist. In the name of the National Government and of the whole movement whose purpose it is to bring about our national resurgence I wish to declare that we in this new Germany are animated by a sympathetic understanding for similar feelings and convictions and vital demands on the part of other nations. The younger generation in Germany has had no other experience since it was born except that of poverty and misery and distress in its own country. It has suffered too much under the madness of the times in which we live to be able to contemplate the idea of making other people suffer likewise. Our National Socialism is inspired by a principle from which our philosophy of life springs. This philosophy of life places upon us fundamental obligations towards the whole of humanity. Because of our unqualified love for and loyalty towards our own people we respect the national rights of others. To be able to live with them in peace and friendship is the deepest wish of our hearts.

The idea of Germanisation has no place in our minds. The mentality of the past century,



which led our rulers to think that they could make Germans of Poles and Frenchmen, is entirely foreign to us. But, on the other hand, we are passionately opposed to such an attempt against us on the part of outsiders. We look upon the European nations around us as firmly established realities. The French and the Poles and others are our neighbours and we can imagine no historical transformation that could alter these realities.

It would have been a happy event for the world if the Treaty of Versailles had taken account of and respected these realities when dealing with Germany; for if a treaty is to have enduring value it must not aim at inflicting new wounds and keeping old wounds open but rather to close and heal them. If European problems had been considered with a normal measure of imaginative insight at that time it would have been possible readily to bring about a settlement in the East which would satisfy the reasonable demands of Poland and at the same time safeguard the natural rights of Germany. But the Treaty of Versailles did not produce such a settlement. Yet no German Government will of its own accord break the

agreement arrived at. It must be allowed to stand as long as there is not a better one forthcoming to replace it.

The juridical character of the Treaty must be acknowledged by all parties. Not only the victor but also the vanquished have certain rights guaranteed therein; and the right to demand a revision of the Treaty has its foundation in the Treaty itself. In stating the motives and extent of its claims the German Government does not go outside what is prescribed by the lesson of experience since the Treaty came into force and also by the deductions of sound and logical reasoning. From the political and economic points of view the experience of the past fourteen years points out the lesson without any ambiguity. The misery of the nations has not been relieved but rendered worse. The deepest roots of this misery will be found to lie in the division of the world into conquerors and conquered and in making this an enduring basis of all future treaties and future adjustments.

The most injurious effect arising from this classification is the compulsory disarming of one nation over against the excessive increase



of armament on the part of the others. The following are the reasons why Germany has for several years called for universal disarmament :

First : The demand that the principle of equality of rights should be expressed in actual facts is a demand that is based on moral grounds, on grounds of justice and on the dictates of human reason. This demand is recognised in the Peace Treaty itself. Indissolubly bound up with its fulfilment is the provision for German disarmament as the first step towards world disarmament.

Second : The disqualification of a great people cannot permanently be maintained. At some time or other it must come to an end. How long do they think that it will be possible to impose such an injustice on a great nation ? What is the significance of a mere passing criterion when set over against the steady development of centuries ? The German nation will continue to exist just as the French have continued to exist and just as the lesson of historical

continuance has shown us how the Poles have continued to exist. Of what value is the temporary suppression of a nation of sixty-five millions of people when contrasted with the force of this incontestable fact ? No state can understand better than Germany does the vital requirements of the national states that have been recently established in Europe ; for this is the Germany that has arisen out of a national revolution inspired by the same principles. Germany makes no demand for herself that she is not ready to champion also in the case of others.

Germany demands to-day that the principle of equality of right should be expressed in facts, and that this expression must take the form of disarmament on the part of the other nations. The moral right of Germany to make this demand arises from her own fulfilment of the Treaty in this respect. Germany has disarmed and has carried out her disarmament under the strictest international control.

Six millions of rifles and carbines were handed



over or destroyed, 130,000 machine-guns, an enormous number of machine-gun barrels, 91,000 cannons, 38,750,000 shells, an enormous number of other weapons and quantities of ammunition—all these the German people had to hand over or destroy. The Rhineland was demilitarised, the German fortresses dismantled and our ships handed over, our aeroplanes destroyed, our system of military service abandoned and the training of reserves thus prevented. Even the weapons necessary for our internal protection were denied us.

In the face of these undeniable facts if anybody should put forward the despicable excuse that Germany has not fulfilled the treaties and has even re-armed—such an assertion I repudiate as false and unfair. Equally false are the statements that Germany has not complied with the terms of the Treaty in regard to personnel. The contention that the Storm Detachments and the Defence Squads of the National Socialist Party have any connection whatsoever with the regular army, in the sense that they are trained military formations or reserves for the army, is untrue.

The irresponsible levity with which such

assertions are made is shown by the following example :

Last year there was a case before the courts in Bruenn against members of the National Socialist Party in Czechoslovakia. Military experts sworn in as witnesses gave testimony that the defendants were in contact with the German National Socialist Party, that they were dependent on it and that as members of the popular sports clubs they were by reason of that fact to be reckoned as appertaining to the Storm Detachments and Defence Squads in Germany, and that these represented a reserve army organised and trained by the German Regular Army. At that time neither the Storm Troops nor the Defence Squads nor the National Socialist Party had any connection at all with the German Regular Army. Not only that, but they were actually being persecuted as organisations dangerous to the State and as such they were eventually prohibited and disbanded. Members of the National Socialist Party, of the Storm Detachments and the Defence Squads were not only excluded from all official positions in the State but they were not allowed to be employed even as



workmen in any branch of army service. Yet the National Socialists in Czechoslovakia were condemned to a long term of penal servitude on the strength of these false accusations.

As a matter of fact the Storm Detachments and Defence Squads of the National Socialist Party arose out of political considerations and were intended to meet the political necessities of the Party. They received no financial support from the State or the Reich or the army, and they had no military training or equipment whatsoever. Their purpose was and is exclusively to overcome the Communist danger. Their training was carried on without any connection with the army and was directed purely towards propagandist and educational ends, psychological mass effect and the paralysing of the Communist terror. They are an institution for the development of the communal spirit, the breaking down of class differences and the removal of economic distress.

The Steel Helmets arose from the desire to keep alive the memory of common experiences at the front during the great epoch of the War, to preserve the spirit of comradeship and to

defend the German people against the danger of a Communist revolution which had been threatening since November 1918. This latter danger cannot be appreciated by countries which have not, like us, millions of organised Communists and have not suffered from their terrorism as Germany has suffered. The real object of these national organisations is illustrated best by the struggles they have actually endured and the sacrifices they have made. In the murderous assaults made by the Communists and acts of terrorism committed by them during the past few years, the Storm Detachments and Defence Squads had over three hundred of their comrades killed and forty thousand wounded. In the light of attempts now made at Geneva to include these organisations, which serve exclusively internal purposes, as an increase of military armament we might as well count in the fire brigade and the athletic clubs and the watch-and-ward societies.

At the same time as these accusations are being made the annual drafts trained in the other armies of the world are not counted among the military forces of those countries. Yet they would do otherwise with us and count



in men who have no military training whatsoever. They overlook their own armed reserves while counting as part of our armed resources those unarmed men who belong to political associations. This is a proceeding against which I must protest in the strongest possible terms. If the world wishes to destroy all trust in justice and righteousness this is one of the best means of doing so. On behalf of the German people and the German Government I make the following declaration :

Germany has disarmed. She has fulfilled all the obligations imposed upon her by the Peace Treaty to a degree far beyond the limits of equity and reason. Her army consists of one hundred thousand men. The strength of her police force and the manner of their organisation and equipment are internationally regulated. The auxiliary police established in the first days of the revolution are of an exclusively political character. In the critical period of the revolution they had to replace that portion of the regular police which was looked upon by the new regime as unsafe. Now that the revolution has been a success their numbers are

being reduced and they will be completely disbanded before the end of the year.

Germany has thus an absolutely justified moral right to demand that the other powers shall, on their side, fulfil their obligations under the Treaty of Versailles. The equality of status accorded to Germany last December has not yet been put into practical effect. In view of the fact that the French repeat their contention that the safety of France must be guaranteed according as Germany is allowed equality of status, I should like to ask two questions :

(1) Germany has so far accepted all the obligations of security involved in her signature to the Treaty of Versailles, the Kellog Pact, the Treaties of Arbitration, the Non-Aggression Pact, etc. What other concrete guarantees can be further given by Germany ?

(2) Against all this what security has Germany ? According to figures given out by the League, France alone has 3,046 aeroplanes in service, Belgium 350, Poland 700, Czechoslovakia 670. Besides this there are innumerable reserve aeroplanes, thousands of tanks, thousands of heavy cannon and all the technical



equipment for carrying on warfare with poison gas. Has not Germany in her defenceless and disarmed condition more right than those armed powers to demand security, especially in view of the fact that those states are bound together in an alliance?

And yet Germany is ready at any moment to undertake further obligations for the guaranteeing of international security if the other nations are ready to do likewise on their side, and if the security thus guaranteed should be to Germany's benefit. Germany would even be willing to go further and to disband her entire military establishment and to destroy the remnant of arms that are left her if the neighbouring nations will do the same thing with equal thoroughness. But if these other States are not willing to put into practice the disarmament provisions to which they are bound under the Peace Treaty of Versailles, then Germany must at least continue her demand for equality of status.

The German Government sees in the British plan a possible basis for the settlement of this question. But it must demand that the defence force now existing in Germany shall

not be abolished unless at least qualitative equality be granted her. Germany must further demand that any change in her defence equipment, which was not chosen by her but imposed upon her from outside, shall proceed step by step at the same pace as the actual disarmament of the other States. Thereby Germany declares herself in essential agreement with the principle of a five year period for the building up of her national security, in the expectation that at the end of this period Germany will be put on a real footing of equality with the other States. Germany is also perfectly ready to renounce all aggressive weapons of every kind if the armed nations on their side will destroy their aggressive armament within a specified period of time and if the use of such armament is forbidden by an international convention. Germany has only one desire, and that is to be able to preserve her independence and defend her frontiers.

According to a statement made by the French War Minister in February 1932, a large number of French coloured troops are ready for use at any time on the French continent. He thus explicitly includes them in the home forces.



It is only just that these coloured forces should also be taken into consideration at the Disarmament Conference as forming part of the French Army. While they object to this being done they want to include among the German effectives societies and organisations which are merely for the purposes of sport and popular education and have no military training whatsoever. In the other countries these societies are not taken into account at all where there is question of the military forces. Such a policy cannot possibly be upheld.

The German Government and the German nation are fully alive to the present crisis. For a long time past Germany has issued warning after warning against those methods which were bound to, and inevitably did, lead to the present political and economic results. If the present line of conduct and the present methods continue to be adhered to there is no doubt as to the ultimate result. Individual nations may secure an apparent political success, but the net result in the long run will be that worse economic and political disasters will fall upon us all. We consider it our first and most pressing duty to ward off these consequences. We

are told by the rest of the world that certain sympathies with Germany were at one time felt. In Germany itself we have experienced the results of these sympathies. Since the Peace Treaty of Versailles the people of Germany have been in the throes of political and economic distress such as cannot be imagined by the rest of the world. Millions of livelihoods have been destroyed, whole professions have been wiped out and we have an enormous army of unemployed. These facts constitute a state of misery the extent of which I may be able to impress upon the world at large by quoting one single cipher from our statistics. It is this : Since the signing of the Peace Treaty, which was to be the foundation stone of a new and better world for all nations, 224,900 people—men and women, old people and children—have put an end to their own lives and in practically every case this has been done under pressure of misery and distress. These unimpeachable witnesses are a standing accusation against the spirit and fulfilment of a treaty to which millions of people in Germany together with the rest of the world looked for peace and salvation.



ADOLF HITLER

I hope that the other nations will understand Germany's resolute desire to put an end to this epoch of muddling and discover a way to a final understanding among the nations on the basis of equal rights for all.



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